

PART I:

Chapter 1: Introductory Chapter

1.1 Introduction

It is widely known that South Africa has amongst the highest number of people infected with HIV in the world (UNAIDS 2008). In the past twenty years, HIV/AIDS has changed the ways in which we understand youth sexuality and has prompted an onslaught of research with the expectation of developing initiatives to combat these rates. A particular challenge that is being faced is the disproportionately high rates among youth populations in South Africa. This is in a setting where the majority of new infections occur during adolescents and young adulthood, 60% of which are before the age of 25 (Abt Associates 2001). Additionally, young women are becoming HIV positive at three times the rate of their male counterparts of the same age group (South African National Prevalence Survey, 2008). In regards to HIV infection, young women peak 10 to 15 years prior to men of their cohort (ibid). Such statistics illustrate the necessity of a better understanding of youth sexualities in South Africa and the sexual behaviours that are contributing to these high statistics.

With the advent of the HIV/AIDS epidemic throughout the African continent, the phenomenon of transactional sex was given great attention by research with the intent of better understanding youth sexualities in order to combat increasing infection rates (see Hunter 2002, Leclerc - Madlala 2004, Luke 2003, Nyanzi et al 2001, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001 for examples). Yet, to a great extent, gaps in the literature have persisted concerning the nature of SDRs. Though transactional sex as a whole, has been established as a focal point of gendered power differentials and resulting implications for HIV infection risks, not enough is known about this type of transactional sex or its essential features. This has presented definitional, conceptual and analytical challenges in studies conducted on this subject (Kuate-Defo 2004).

The SDR is constituted by the centrality of the transaction as it is the predominant reason young women engage in this type of relationship and the motivation for termination once it is no longer accessible. As the determinant, the resource is implicated in the very structure of SDRs as the

relationship itself is constructed around it. Consequentially, the transaction becomes the subject that all aspects of SDR are mediated by.

From a definitional perspective, key questions concerning what necessarily qualifies as an SDR have yet to be firmly established. This has raised concerns around equating transactional sex to prostitution. Placing SDRs under the definition of prostitution however, becomes problematic as this Eurocentric concept is not only negatively connotated (Ankrah 1989, Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2004), it does not thoroughly accommodate understandings of transactional sex relationships (Leclerc-Madlala 2004). While the sex-money exchange is central to both relationships, of great importance is that young women in SDR do not self-identify as prostitutes (Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, MacPhail and Campbell 2001, Wood and Jewkes 2001). Young women in SDRs themselves stigmatized prostitution, othering and distancing it by drawing upon and emphasizing differentiating characteristics. Rather, they constructed themselves as 'girlfriends', emphasizing the relationship context of SDR. Because the transaction transpires within a relationship, SDR does not readily fit into conventional definitions of prostitution.

The majority of research conducted on SDRs has focused on various forms of 'survival sex' - young women who sexually engage older men in order to secure essential necessities such as food, basic clothing and school fees (Parker & Aggleton 2000). Studies that do acknowledge 'consumption sex', have framed these relationships as having arisen from poverty. Because of this, they have assessed them in a context of young women being wholly and ultimately disempowered. As 'survival sex' is a prevalent occurrence throughout countries in Africa, analyzing this type of SDR is necessary. However, there are two main problems that arise from narrowing in on 'survival sex'. Firstly, it does not account for the increasing trend of young women who enter into SDRs, not for basic necessities but to acquire resources for purposes of consumption and material gain (Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Hunter 2002, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). This differentiation in the reasons of engaging SDR has been acknowledged in the literature but no in-depth analysis has been conducted. Secondly, in addition to this form of transactional sex, how SDRs are constituted and the impact that engaging in SDRs for purposes

of consumption has on the nature of the relationship has been largely ignored. This takes into account the resource itself and how SDRs are constructed around it. Moreover, within South Africa, a substantial number of studies have opted to conduct research in more rural areas, overlooking university settings in urban spaces in particular. Yet, this study has identified this environment as a space where widespread and deeply entrenched social networks facilitating SDR initiation have not only been established but institutionalized. Understanding this shifting nature of a certain type of SDR is of great significance as it has an important impact on the power differentials young women must negotiate within their relationships.

An additional misguided approach often within the literature has been to reduce all transactional sex relationships to the transaction itself, in disregard of the fact that SDRs occur within the context of a relationship. What have been rarely documented in the literature are the resulting intimacies beyond the transaction. Emotive responses of love, desire and pleasure were frequently expressed by young women in relation to their SDs. Such expressions were found to be an important component of SDRs and further illustrated the intricacies of intimacy (Dunkle et al 2007, Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2004). However, links to these poignant responses and the resource became apparent as the resource itself was central in the invocation of claims of love, pleasure and sexual desire. Such feelings were often induced by markers of money, power and social status signified by SDs. Though intimacies extended beyond the transaction, they were also stimulated as a result of it.

An investigation of the nature of SDRs raises queries regarding the implications of engaging this type of relationship. Without question, strong links between SDRs and increased HIV infection risk cannot be negated. Youth sexualities in South Africa are characterized by severe gendered power differentials often leading to sexual coercion and rape and this is no less the case in SDRs (Wagman et al 2009, Wood et al 1998, Wood et al 2007). Moreover, the power dynamics of age and economic disparities characteristic of this type of transactional sex further entrench young women's inability to negotiate safe sex within encounters with their SDs. What becomes apparent is how the nature of SDRs play a serious role in the women's increased risk of HIV infection. The resource being essential to SDR, facilitated circumstances where once resources have been accepted, SDs exerted more power in controlling when sex occurred and the terms and

conditions under which it did, as young women now had to ‘keep up’ their end of the bargain, namely, providing sex (Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). The centrality of the resource created a situation where negotiating power within sex was constrained. Thus, the nature of the SDR itself was conducive to increased HIV vulnerability. Furthermore, how these intimacies affected decision-making in regards to safer sex practices were also of great importance. As SDRs were constructed in a context of a ‘boyfriend/girlfriend’ relationship, discourses around trust, for example, have been given as to why many young women did not use condoms with their main sexual partners (Hunter 2002, Manuel 2005, Varga 1997).

1.2 Key Aims of Study

The main point of interest which forms the basis of this study is to gain insights into what meanings female students at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) currently engaging in SDR are being given in the construction of their sexuality. While there is a substantial body of knowledge on transactional sex, the specific ‘sugar daddy’ phenomenon and the nature of this type of relationship has not been thoroughly interrogated. Moreover, there has been a greater focus on young women in rural areas of the country, highly overlooking students in urban, university settings throughout South Africa.

Notions of the victimization of young women have frequently been a focal point. Young women engaging in transactional sex within South Africa have often been characterized as impoverished victims, subject to the sexual exploitation of their older male counterparts. Continuing research in this area has countered this depiction by arguing that young women are active social agents using a degree of power to navigate the situations that they are in (Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). This particular research yielded that female students at Wits do not easily fit into the category of ‘poor victims’. Secondly, they reside in Johannesburg as opposed to townships or rural areas where most studies in South Africa have been conducted (see Dunkle et al 2004, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Selikow 2005, Wojcicki & Malala 2001 for examples). Therefore, frameworks that have been utilized in these studies may not readily apply to this particular demographic. This research tackles the ‘victimization’ approach by analyzing

the complexities of power and how they are constrained and enabled in various domains in SDRs. The structural forces are also explored as well as young women's ability to navigate them.

Because young women construct their SDRs within the context of a relationship, the subject of intimacies beyond the transaction will be interrogated as it is not represented in the literature. Notions of love, pleasure, desire and other sentiments are explored further as being an integral component of SDRs.

How all of these aspects of SDRs impact HIV/AIDS vulnerability and how the young women perceive and interpret this risk are an essential part of this study. Their sexual behaviour and their own risk perception are further examined.

1.3 Structure of Thesis

Following this introductory chapter, a literature review of theories pertinent to this study and an engagement of the literature are elaborated on in Chapter 2. After this, an outline of the research methods used in participant recruitment data collection and procedure along with ethical considerations will be given. Chapters 4 to 10 consist of a critical realist discourse analysis examining the extensive narratives from focus groups and in-depth interviews of young women in SDR and their constructs of sexuality will follow. In chapter 11, the central findings of this study will be given.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following literature review engages the published work of social scientists on topics on and associated with transactional sex relationships and female sexuality. Their research is analyzed and various issues and concerns that contribute to this study are presented here. This literature review highlights the body of work that this study has been built on and will draw attention to gaps within the literature that my intended research will help to fill.

2.1 Paradigm Shifts in Sexuality Research

Prior to social constructionism, essentialist paradigms dominated in the conceptualization of human sexuality. As an idealized paradigm, essentialism in its extreme holds that sexuality is a presumed human trait, its existence being innate, biological and universal (DeLamater and Hyde 1998). Sexual identities are biologically encoded, resulting from the ‘essence’ of our genetics (ibid). However, there has been a theoretical shift towards social constructionist approaches and their understandings of sexuality (Vance 1991). Here, sexuality is a construct informed by socio-cultural, economic and political structures, organized and enacted within them (DeLamater Hyde 1998).

A paradigm that stresses the integral role that culture and socialization play in shaping sexual behaviour and attitudes towards it is needed in youth sexuality research (Parker 2009). While essentialism and social constructionism have often been polarized in debates around sexuality, it is argued that a theory which understands sexuality within a paradigm integrating both essentialist and social constructionist element is the most beneficial. (Selikow 2005). A prime example of this is the standpoint Weeks takes on homosexuality. He holds homosexual behaviour to be universal. It is homosexual identity which is informed by cultures and histories and thus, is specific to them (1977). Weeks asks “what are the meanings this particular culture gives to homosexual behaviour, however it may be caused, and what are the effects of those meanings on the ways in which individuals organize their sexual lives (1995:34)”. These questions can also be imposed in reference to young women engaging in transactional sex. What meanings are structural forces giving to the sexual behaviour of young women in SDRs and how are they informing the ways in which they construct their sexual identity and lives?

2.2 What is Sexuality?

An initial dilemma encountered when exploring youth sexualities is the attempt to define what sexuality actually is (Selikow 2005). While it is centralized around sex, it is held that it encompasses much more than this physical act. Incorporating a social constructionist framework into defining sexuality requires acknowledging the larger structural influences on sexuality (Peltzer & Pengpid 2006). Holland et al provide a working definition of sex which accomplishes this:

“By sexuality we mean not only sexual practices, but also what people know and believe about sex, particularly what they think is natural, proper and desirable. Sexuality also includes people’s sexual identities in all their cultural and historical variety. This assumes that while sexuality cannot be divorced from the body, it is also socially constructed (339:1990)”.

In addition to this definition, gender does not only inform sexuality, it provides a larger framework that appropriates sexuality (Gagnon & Parker 1995:8). Therefore, gender constructions of young women’s femininity mediate sexual practices within SDRs. This approach holds that sexuality permeates into many aspects of young women’s lives including a strong interlink with gender and how they understand and enact their femininity in SDR. Also, how they are constructing identities in conjunction with their sexual lives. Of great significance, this working definition maintains that socio-cultural, political and economic structures tremendously inform how sexuality is constructed. Thus, it cannot be properly understood if removed from this larger context (Parker 2009).

In South Africa, youth sexuality cannot be properly explored outside of a context of HIV/AIDS. With particular focus on young women, this demographic is most vulnerable to being infected. More recently, an approach to sexuality research has called for the exploration of the power complexities in relation to gender within sexual relationships (Parker 2009). Further, the cultural, economic and political influences must be factored into the power differentials that manifest in these relationships. The general disempowerment of young women within an acutely patriarchal society is further entrenched by institutionalized economic depression and socio-cultural marginalization. Situations here, are created where young women do not enter sexual encounters

as equals to their male counterparts. In a reality where HIV/AIDS is ever-present, the inability for women to negotiate safe sex practices, primarily condom use, or repel unwanted sexual advances increases their vulnerability to becoming infected (MacPhail & Campbell 2001, Wood et al 2008). As constructs of gender interconnect with sexuality, throughout South Africa, this has manifested in sexual relationships. The sexual violence of young women by their partners, coerced and forced sex in its extremity, have been well documented (Wagman et al 2009, Wood 2005, Wood et al 2007). Such studies as this one conducted in the Western Cape where 60% of young women reported having sex against their will (Wood et al 1998:239) demonstrates this.

The recognition of the plurality and multi-dimensionality of youth sexuality is necessary in this field of research (MacPhail & Campbell 2001, Wood et al 2008). Indicative of this is that despite the structural setting that sustains power differentials in sexual relationships and that sexual violence against women is a common occurrence in the country, young women do exercise a power of resistance in creative ways. Documented among sex works in Hillbrow, Johannesburg and mainland China, women invoked agency by increasing the price of unprotected sex (Choi & Holroyd 2007, Wojcicki & Malala 2001). Young women in SDR also had creative ways in which they navigated situations where their negotiating power within sexual encounters in SDRs was constrained.

2.3 What is Transactional Sex?

One of the major difficulties of studying transactional sex relationships is defining what precisely constitutes transactional sex (Luke 2005). Any sexual relationships where gifts have been given and sexual relations have occurred cannot ultimately, be classified as transactional. Here, however, the line distinguishing transactional sex from general pre-marital sexual relationships is blurred. This is particularly the case in a southern African context where gift-giving linked to sexual access is a widely practiced norm (Kaufman and Stavrou 2004, Poulin 2007). The giving of the bridewealth, *lobola*, is a prime example of this. However, in SDR, this transaction is not negotiated between families (Dunkle et al 2007). Before a concrete definition can be provided, a description of what transactional sex is not is given.

2.3.1 Transactional Sex vs. ‘Prostitution’

The term, ‘transactional sex’, seen throughout the academic literature has often been viewed as being synonymous with ‘prostitution’ or commercial sex work as conceptualized by a Western perspective (Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Wojcicki 2002). Transactional sex can be said to be similar to sex work in certain aspects, including that they consist of non-marital relationships and are usually engaged in with multiple concurrent partners for rewards (Hunter 2002, Luke 2002). However, the lack of a formal, ‘one-off’ exchange, a definitive feature of sex work, is one differentiating characteristic. Relations between a sex worker and their ‘client’ are usually based on a contractual and impersonal agreement where money is directly exchanged for sexual services. Transactional sex, on the other hand, more often occurs within the context of a relationship where gifts, favours, services and/or support are provided in exchange for sexual relations. They usually occur over a longer period of time and cannot be clearly separated from everyday life (Leclerc-Madlala 2004:2). Further, there is a degree of intimacy that is not found in sexual relations between a sex worker and the client. Lastly, women engaging in transactional sex do not self-identify as sex-workers (Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Wood & Jewkes 2001). They have constructed their partner as a boyfriend/girlfriend, not as a client or sex worker. Prostitution is othered and perceived to be a morally degenerating act.

2.3.2 From ‘Survival’ Towards Consumption

Initially SDRs were described as a means of acquiring basic necessities of sustenance in situations where impoverished women sought to lessen the burden of economic stresses. The resulting term, ‘survival sex’ is frequently used in reference to this type of relationship (Leclerc-Madlala 2004). Transactional sex, however, has become increasingly common as a means of consumption and ascription to materialism which is seen to be the defining feature of modernity (Hunter 2002, Kaufman & Stavrou 2002, Kuate-Defo 2004, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Luke 2002, 2003).

2.3.3 Defining Transactional Sex and ‘Sugar Daddy’ Relationships

It is clear that transactional sex relationships do not readily fit into the category of prostitution or sex work. Thus, in any attempt to define them, it becomes clear that their very nature is one of

fluidity. Firstly, transactional sex can generally be defined as the “transfer of money or gifts from one partner in exchange for sexual relations from the other (Luke 2003:67)”. When defining the so-called ‘sugar daddy’ phenomenon in particular, the two integral characteristics are age and economic ‘asymmetry’ (Luke 2003, 2005). In terms of age, Luke stipulates a difference of ten years or more between the partners as a qualifying factor (Luke 2005:8). I argue that a stipulated minimum of age difference is not as useful a marker in this study as the sexual partnership of individuals from two different generations. Thus the terms, ‘intergenerational’ transactional sex (Luke and Kurz 2002). Furthermore, the economic disparity is an essential factor. Older men usually have much greater resources and financial capital at their disposal than the young women they engage with (Luke 2005). Hence, for purposes of this study, a ‘sugar daddy’ relationship can be defined as a relationship where an older man of a different generation gives money, gifts, favours and services to a younger woman in exchange for sexual relations.

2.4 Intimacy- Beyond the Transaction

The access to money and gifts being an integral reason as to why young women engage in SDRs, raises issues regarding its centrality to the relationship. A level of intimacy is constructed in SDRs while these relationships often extend beyond the acquisition of money, gifts and favours. They are strongly influenced by complex commitments of love, desire, pleasure and the security of a future involving marriage and childbearing (Dunkle et al 2007, Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madadla, 2004). These intricacies raise the questions: does the existence of transactional relationships depend on the mutual understanding that once the *predominant* reason of engagement, namely gifts/money or sex, no longer occurs, the relationship be dissolved? If not, does the relationship no longer qualify as SDR? Such questions further emphasize the fluidity of transactional sex relationships.

I argue that the age difference and economic asymmetry are linked to pre-existing socially entrenched power dynamics seen throughout all cultures, in particular those in South Africa. The impact of these dynamics is particularly more acute in the era of HIV/AIDS. It has been shown that young women engaging in these relationships are less able to enforce safe sex practices with their partners because money, gifts and favours were exchanged for these relations (Gregson et al 2002, Kelly et al 2003, Luke 2005). Also, transactional sex usually occurs within the context of a

relationship. Thus, there is often a certain level of intimacy, decreasing the likelihood of consistent condom use (Selikow 2005:201, Varga 1997). Because these relationships are primarily initiated to maximize the procurement of money, gifts and services, multiple concurrent sexual partnerships are key factors in high HIV infection rates (Gregson et al 2002, Hunter 2002, Kelly et al 2003). If the money, gifts and services exchanged have a great influence over resulting sexual behaviour of women, as they are having sex where they otherwise wouldn't (Dunkle 2007; Hunter, 2002.Selikow, 2002), and age and economic asymmetries exacerbate this influence, SDRs can have life-altering consequences in a country where HIV/AIDS is endemic.

2.5 Social Meanings of Money

Traditional ideas reduce conceptions of money to 'market money' (Zelizer 2005). While this utilitarian point of view cannot be devalued as it is the integral component of a modern economy, divorcing the social and symbolic importance from money does not leave room for the acknowledgement of not only the impact of money on society but the social influences that shape the meanings we assign to it. It is argued that the vast majority of research conducted on money has been outside the disciplines of social science (Zelizer 2005). This has resulted in a substantial lack of ideas on the socio-cultural character of money. Arguing against this 'utilitarian' model, money is not only imbued with social meaning, it is subjected to the social and cultural forces then becoming a social agent, the sender of social messages and meaning (Zelizer 1997). Its uses are shaped by people who translate socio-political, cultural and sexual ideas and practices of an informal economy.

2.6 The 'Purchase of Intimacy'

Perspectives ignoring the intricacies of social meaning and money usually follow a model that understands sexual intimacies and economic transactions as being two separate and bounded domains, each unrelated to the other (Nelson 1998, Zelizer 2005). The melding of one domain into the other is seen as an infringement as economic activity immoralizes and impersonalizes social relations. Contributing to the polarization of these two domains is notions of money being an objective material unaffected by social meaning (Zelizer 2007). If money is viewed as an indifferent, 'colourless' objectifier, impervious to social meaning and practices, then any affiliation of it with sexual relations would deem such relations as impersonal, removed from any

emotional ties. Further, if money is beyond social influence, any association of it with sexual intimacies evokes a perception of such a relationship as being informal, bringing its morality into question. In the context of SDR, this approach pinpoints the transaction while removing it from the construction of a relationship.

More recent veins of thought have acknowledged a relation between economic transactions and sexual intimacies and have sought to better understand their connection (Zelizer 2005). This framework is utilized here as SDRs are held to be a space where sexual intimacies and economic transactions are interconnected.

2.7 Structure and Agency

In the context of sexuality, there is a long standing debate concerning structure and agency. Within the feminist movement, the 'radical' camp parallels to structural arguments. It holds that sex has been institutionalized within a patriarchal society, thus, women are objectified through any sexual practices (Sawicki 1991:29). They also argue that transactional sex, SDRs in particular, are based on male control. Therefore, a young woman can never be perceived as an equal partner because she is, ultimately, a 'sex object' (Sawicki 1991:17). Further, women in their early to late teens are subject to the influences of peer pressures and mass media which idealize material displays of status. These displays are directly linked to the 'pursuit of modernity' (Leclerc-Madlala 2004) and attempts to adhere to constructions of an ideal femininity. All of these structural forces greatly influence youth cultures. Because of a lack of financial capital among this demographic, the attainment of these ideals is difficult. SDRs can be viably utilized to achieve these ideals.

On the other hand, transactional sex can be seen as a site where women are asserting and legitimizing their sexual freedom by confronting patriarchal institutions and traditional constructions of their sexuality (Sawicki 1991:32). This view of the 'libertarian' camp more readily falls in line with the approach of agency being the driving force in female participation in SDR.

The question of whether structure or agency has dominant influence over the other has continuously been put forth. The dichotomous relationship of structure and agency has more

recently been called into question (Archer 2003). The ontological question of what place do 'structure' and 'agency' occupy comes into play (Archer 2003). Archer adopts a post-structuralist approach to the debate and puts forward that the two are 'ontologically inseparable' due to the understanding that each "enters into the other's constitution (2003)". Thus, there should be a shift of focus from a causal approach of structure and agency to one of an intricate interplay. In this context, it must be considered how structural and cultural powers impinge on young women's lives thus allowing transactional sex relationships to become a viable option. However, the personal agency they exercise in these same relationships to navigate structural forces must also be taken into account.

It is here that the notion of agency and its enactments as a means of power and resistance arise. Young women have agency which is exercised primarily through their sexuality and are claiming power that challenges social and cultural norms. When researching self-constructs of female sexuality and how perceptions of agency and risk fit into them, an approach which places individuals and the sexual relationships they engage in within a larger socio-cultural and economic context must be taken. How young women conceptualize sex, its meaning and their sexual identity is shaped by structures that are beyond the individual. Thus, resulting sexual behaviour cannot solely be viewed as an expression of personal agency, but also as challenging and conforming to social, political and economic structures on multiple levels. The social, cultural and economic structures that have provided an avenue for transactional sex relationships to be so widespread and simultaneously constrain young women's agency within them need to be addressed. Transactional relationships do not occur in and of themselves but within pre-existing social structures that sanction these power dynamics (Kuate-Defo 2004).

This approach does not lead to a straightforward answer as to whether young women are ultimately, being (dis)empowered through such relationships. I argue that no such conclusion can be reached at all. In addition, I also argue that such an approach is misguided. What does become clear, however, is the concept of power and the integral role it plays in this debate. The complexity of SDRs, and the multiple levels and domains at which power is being exerted and inhibited become evident.

2.8 Power

In any attempt made to analyze concepts and understandings of power, it would be beneficial to look at the works and theories of Michel Foucault. When applying Foucault's concept of power, it becomes impossible to analyze sexuality as a unilateral relation. Through a Foucauldian approach, sexuality is not an entity being repressed by power. Rather, it appears as an "especially dense transfer point for relations of power (Foucault 1979:103)". Further, Foucault holds that resistance is a form of power that sporadically arises in different spaces as a dynamic of power change (1979). This has been illustrated amongst sex workers who lack control to enforce condom use and thus, increase charges for this risk (Choi & Holroyd 2007, Wojcicki & Malala 2001). How this applies to young women engaging in transactional sex and the ways in which they have agency to negotiate situations in which their ability to negotiate safer sex practices, for example, is compromised is of great interest (Wojcicki & Malala 2001).

The earlier academic literature on transactional sex had a tendency of portraying women in these relationships as impoverished, passive 'victims' who were being subjected to sexual exploitation by older and often more economically secure men. It is here that the term 'survival sex' emerged (Leclerc-Madlala 2004). It has become increasingly evident that relationships of this nature are frequently pursued to acquire material items and are more of a consumerist nature and not for basic necessities (Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Hunter 2002). In the case of sugar daddies, often a decision by young women is made to enter these relationships with the intent of exploiting their partner to further their own interests in their 'pursuit of modernity' (Leclerc-Madlala 2004).

Many aspects of transactional relationships do provide a means for young women to assert themselves in ways that they could not readily do because of social, cultural and economic barriers. Gaining access to material resources via one's sexuality can be said to 'level the playing field' in societies where men have, indeed, had a virtual monopoly. This in itself can be seen to be a source of power. In a setting where young women are given and expected to employ a status subordinate to their male counterparts, exercising power that disputes normative constructs of female sexuality and identity can be a source of empowerment. However, traditional power dynamics based on gender, age and economic status within transactional relationships have not been eradicated. In many ways it appears that they become further entrenched.

A near universal that has been accounted for by research on transactional sex throughout southern Africa is that young women lack a great deal of negotiating power, especially in regards to condom use in sexual relationships (Dunkle et al 2004, Kuate-Defo 2004, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Luke 2003, 2005). Many of the individuals in these studies said that condom use was not preferred by their partners (Luke 2003, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). In various cases where it was suggested, they were subjected to force and violent behaviour (Luke 2003). This directly places young women in a vulnerable position of contracting HIV. Though they lack power to negotiate protecting their health within transactional relationships, these women do exercise their power to enter them having knowledge of such risks.

Services of a sexual nature are often the only 'commodity' young girls have to bargain with (Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). In situations where sexual services are the only bargaining tool that the young women have to negotiate with in order to receive gifts and money, they possess little or no power when it comes to the nature of the sex they are expected to have.

It must be stated, that the contradictions inherent in these constructions of sexuality and its use as an act of resistance and a claim to power is not lost on many of the women engaging in transactional sex relationships (Leclerc-Madlala, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). Not only do they engage in them anyway with knowledge of HIV risk and vulnerability to other health problems, this is done with the resolve that their reasons for entering transactional relationships outweigh the possible dire consequences (Leclerc-Madlala 2004). The risk of losing access to the economic resources that supply immediate, though short-term, gratification and social status, are believed to far outweigh the longer-term risk of HIV infection. The constructed intimacy of the relationship also undermines risk perception.

This review of the literature presents the work conducted on transactional sex relationships and the extensive debates that surround this topic. Further, it highlights the gaps that are still outstanding in the literature. An investigation of this literature provided the groundwork for the following research.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

An exclusively qualitative approach was taken in this research as it was the most relevant method in the ascertainment of sexuality constructs among young women in this study. The research methods outlined were employed in the unpacking of these constructs.

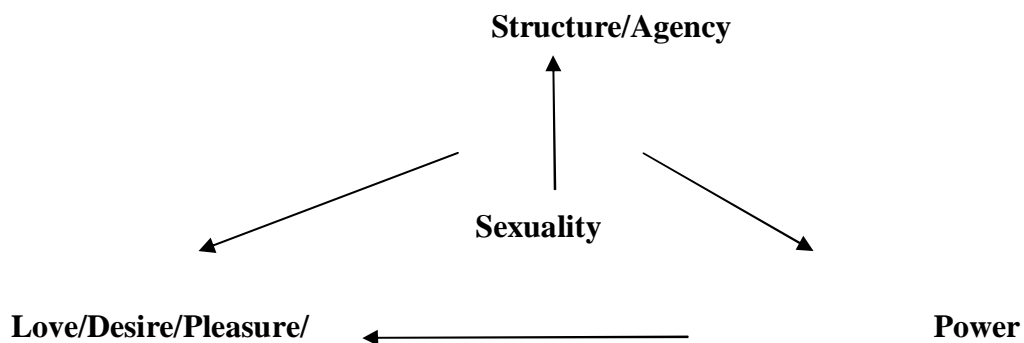
3.1 Aim of Research

Through this in-depth study, sexuality of young women attending the University of the Witwatersrand and engaging in 'sugar daddy' relationships was conducted. Using qualitative research, I asked the following key question: **What meanings are being given by young women engaging in SDR in the construction of their sexuality?** I also asked, what factors are informing their definitions of womanhood in terms of sexuality? Further, how can these definitions work for and against women, particularly in the context of HIV/AIDS vulnerability? I sought to gain insights into these questions through the objectives below:

1. Examining the nature of SDRs among female students and how they come into existence. This included analyzing their initiation, duration and termination and how this was negotiated between the individuals engaging in them. Cultural, social and structural factors that may have been a catalyst for these relationships were also studied.
2. I analyzed constructions of sexuality as a means of challenging the traditional sexuality norms for women and the resisting of social and cultural standards of gender and its accompanying roles. Further, I explored the ways in which these self-constructs reproduced and reinforced these same norms. I sought to better understand the contradictions inherent in any self-construct and how they manifested in the context of female sexuality.
3. I explored central notions of structure and agency in SDRs and how they were being manifested within them. Agency was also studied as a tool of (dis)empowerment on multiple levels in the relationships. How this agency was used to navigate aforementioned structural forces was a further area that was examined.

4. Risk perceptions of HIV/AIDS infection in the understandings of female sexuality were also explored. How the disease was defined and understood and how it related to ideas of vulnerability was also of interest. Further, how these perceptions were prioritized by the young women in the choices they made regarding their relationships was a key objective.
5. Investigating ideas around desire and pleasure was also an important objective of this study. As transactional sex occurred within the context of a relationship, exploring what/if young women expected, anticipated and wanted from their partners beyond the material assistance and favours was of significance. The impact this had on the relationship was key as well.

3.2 Theoretical Framework



(Gbalajobi 2009)

The theoretical framework utilized in orienting this study examined sexuality of women in SDR through domains of structure and agency, power, and love, desire and pleasure.

3.3 Research Design and Data Collection

This research took a qualitative approach in accessing a tight social network of young women engaging in SDR relationships. The components of this research methodology were designed to best access and interrogate the narratives of these young women. Building on an established rapport, a low degree of participant observation was implemented by keeping continuous formal and informal contact. Preliminary surveillances of the residences were conducted with the intent of establishing this space as a site for SDR initiation and maintenance (Bray 2008).

3.3.1 Participants Group and Recruitment

Participants

The population chosen for this study was composed of 10 young women, all undergraduate and postgraduate students at the University of the Witwatersrand (also referred to in this study as ‘Wits’). The ages of individuals within this group ranged from 20 to 27 years old. With the exception of one woman, all had currently or recently lived at two all-female residences on campus. Some resided in other residences both on and off campus and one young woman lived with relatives in Johannesburg.

A particular participant in this study, Kagiso, gave an exceptionally rich and thought-provoking narrative of her ideas and experiences within her SD relationship. For this reason, Chapter 7, ‘Beyond the Transaction: Intimacies of Love, Desire and Pleasure’ was structured around sentiments she revealed in her story.

Focus Groups

In addition to the in-depth interviews, three focus groups were also conducted to evoke themes, trends and nuances about sexuality, gender, relationships, HIV/AIDS, and concepts associated with these topics (Bernard 2005). These group discussions revealed invaluable information as they created a space for vigorous exchange of ideas through group discussion in a short period of time (Morgan 1997). Additionally, they allowed me, as the facilitator to observe the ways in which various topics were received and discussed. One focus group comprised of four women

not engaging in SD relationships (NSF1) and the remaining two were composed of women who were involved in this type of relationship (SF1 & SF2). Four women were a part of SF1 and two made up SF2. This choice of conducting distinct focus groups separating young women in SDR from those who were not was made due to an apprehension that a mixed setting could hinder honest discussions due to fear of judgment and stigmatization. Also, the choice to incorporate young women not involved in SDR was implemented to capture the diversity their discussions produced with the intent of raising a greater array of ideas and conceptions. All three of the focus group discussions revealed interesting narratives and were thus, integrated into the discourse analysis section as a means of capturing the richness of narratives from this understudied topic.

Field Sites

The reason for the two on-campus, all-female residences being targeted as sites for participant recruitment was largely due to these spaces being labeled as sites of initiation and maintenance of SDR. Rudimentary observation of the outdoor premises of these two residences over a period of two months further established this. These spaces consistently experienced high ‘traffic’ of older men interacting with female residents during weeknights and weekends. In addition, students who lived in residences were exposed to a unique environment where they were often at a distance from the family environment (institution) and among peer groups (social group prone to pressure) (Selikow et al 2009).

3.3.2 Recruitment and Procedure

Insider’s View

As an individual who has lived in student residence both on and off campus over the past year, I developed a rapport with several young women who were engaging in SDR and were a part of a greater network of individuals also in such relationships. This granted me a privilege of access, allowing me to conduct research on this particular topic. During this time, I cultivated friendships with two young women engaging in SDR who ultimately became my key informants. Because of my unique position, I was allowed to attain a minimal ‘insider’ perspective (Bray 2008:307).

Sampling

Working closely with my key informants, a combination of purposive and snowball sampling were used as the two main participant selection methods. This granted me access to a specific subset of young women who were involved in SD relationships thus, producing participants who were best able to provide insights into the issues relevant to this study (Bernard 2005). Snowball sampling was then utilized as these young women then put me in contact with others within their social networks who were also engaging in SDR. The two sampling methods not only produced women who became a part of this study, it also revealed the extensive social network that existed amongst those in SD relationships.

An unanticipated issue of participants wishing to maintain anonymity from me as the interviewer arose during the course of data collection which prompted an adjustment of interview strategy amongst several young women in this study. Three interviews were conducted over the phone while informed consent was attained and recorded verbally. While these young women were willing to discuss their relationships in great depth, they were not as forthcoming with the revelation of their identities. Additionally, five young women who initially agreed to participate in this study later withdrew. Two young women gave the explanation of not having enough time. The remainder admitted to my key informants of having 'second thoughts' about their involvement in this study despite assurance of anonymity. This strongly supported the social stigma attached to transactional sex relationships and the effects of this stigma on young women.

Interview

An open-ended interview structure was used consisting of discursive and semi-structured methods. Discursive techniques helped to create an environment for young women to talk openly and facilitate free discussion and assisted in attaining a level of comfort (Bray 2008:309). With the progression of the interview, a semi-structured technique was implemented to direct the informant to issues more relevant to this study (Bernard 2005). This technique proved to be successful as an environment was created where young women felt a high level of comfort. This was supported by several reasons given by the young women such as being able to tell their story, a space to vent and engaging in 'girl talk'.

A device was utilized to accurately record narratives from the in-depth interviews which were subsequently transcribed (Bernard 2005).

3.4 Discourse Analysis

To analyze narratives of young women engaging in transactional sex relationships, Critical Realist Discourse Analysis (CRDA) was used. The main objective of this analysis method was to gain an understanding as to why participant speakers referred to particular discourses as opposed to others and how the 'extra-discursive' plays a role in this. Critical realism holds that language constructs our social realities. However, constructs of these realities are subject to the possibilities and limitations inherent in the material world and social life (Sims-Schouten et al 2007). Critical realism awards an ontological status to the material world, relating it to discursive practice without it being dependent on it. In other words, social life and the material world are not reduced to discourse. Having said this, language is as real and important as the physical or material as it influences social practices (Selikow 2005:93).

As a discourse analysis applied to sexuality, critical realism recognizes that though young women engage and experience sexual acts through their bodies, these acts are understood through the discourses and narratives available in order to conceptualize and comprehend them (Selikow 2005:91). The number of discourses that they have to choose from to account for themselves is finite. The ways in which they do this is within the means of embodiment, institutions and materiality (Sims-Schouten et al 2007:107). This approach, further, abandons a dualistic perspective to the structure-agency debate by understanding that structures impinge on human agency but agency can be used in creative ways to navigate such structures. Thus, it is compatible with the direction this research intends to take.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

During the course of this research, standard ethical principles and processes employed by the Wits and the discipline of anthropology as a whole were upheld. Although my position of

‘insider’ was held in a considerable part of this study and a rapport with key informants was established, I ensured that standard ethical procedures were adhered to.

During the initial phase of participant recruitment in this study, I was open, honest and upfront concerning what each stage of participation entailed. This included securing proper written informed consent for the focus group, in-depth interview and the recording of these sessions from all participants. They were told that a study was being conducted on how young women at Wits in relationships with older men of a different generation for the purpose of gaining access to resources define and understand their sexuality. However, because many young women were recruited through my key informants, they were blatantly aware that this was a study being conducted on ‘sugar daddy’ relationships. Further, insights into how they enacted their sexuality and whether this gave them feelings of empowerment or disempowerment were sought.

I also ensured that the narratives given were confidential in the strictest sense and the real identities of my participants remained anonymous. While anonymity and confidentiality could not be guaranteed in the focus group, the group discussions were designed to mainly explore *general* themes and ideas on sex, sexuality, gender and HIV risk and were purposely composed of young women who were friends with one another. Only pseudonyms were used and though basic information, such as where the young women were from, was included, anything that could possibly be linked to the identity of a participant was eliminated (Babbie & Mouton 2001).

As these were my two main sites, letters of permission were obtained from the on-campus, all-female residences, allowing me to conduct research among young women who live there.

In conclusion, this study was conducted in an open and honest manner with all participants making sure that they were fully aware that their involvement was strictly voluntary and they were able to withdraw at any given time. Additionally, they were made aware that they were free to ask any questions or inquire about further information. A 24 hour contact number was provided.

3.6 Limitations of Study

Throughout this study, several limitations from this research were recognized. Future research into these 'gaps' are encouraged.

Research conducted on youth sexualities and youth cultures are not only necessary, they are imperative in an era where the pandemic nature of HIV/AIDS in South Africa will be a reality for a long time to come. Future youth populations will undoubtedly face similar issues if changes are not made with regards to sexual behaviour. Furthermore, young women will continue to bare the brunt of the disease as it is a culmination of structurally violence institutions that marginalize them. Any risk-reducing initiative that has any prospect of success must understand the ways in which young women are being uniquely affected and infected by HIV/AIDS.

However, if we are to implement effective change, men must be included in sexuality research and resulting programs (Woods & Jewkes 1997). This study chose to focus on sexuality constructs of young women in SDR but acknowledges the equal importance of research conducted among SDs and how they are constructing their masculinity within these relationships. In relation to this, this study was only able to examined gender constructs and not gender relations because of the absence of men in this research. I strongly advocate for such a commission be undertaken.

A major limitation of this study was the small participant population. While rich and rewarding narratives were given producing gainful insights, a larger number of individuals partaking in this study would have only served to bolster findings. Because of the difficulties inherent in permeating this demographic and the social stigma attached to SDR, intended numbers for this study were reduced due to recants of participation. If access is permissible, it is recommended that more key informants be recruited to increase numbers of potential participants in account for those who may withdraw.

Gaps in this research are also acknowledged as a limitation to central findings as this study sought to gain insights into all aspects of SDRs resulting in a generalization of many topics. It is recommended that domains outlined in this study become a point of focus in order to reveal more in-depth and detailed data.

3.7 Moments of Reflexivity

My positionality within my research privileged me to engage many young women in SDRs and establish a rapport with them. However, this positionality also highlighted the false dichotomy of the insider/outsider perspective (Narayan 1993). Without question certain attributes that I possessed allowed a possibility of me accessing this demographic in ways that would not be a reality for other individuals. The fact that I am also a young, black woman enrolled at the same university afforded me an 'in'. Young women repeatedly assumed, often rightfully so, that I could relate to them on certain issues that were being discussed because of this 'insider' perspective. However, other attributes such as the fact that I am from 'the West' and English is my first and only language created moments of tension. There were perceptions that I didn't 'need' to engage in SDR because, as a Westerner, I surely 'had it'. Further, slang words or phrases in Zulu vernacular that I did not understand served to make me hypervisible as being an 'outsider'. This position of continuously being 'inside' and 'outside', often simultaneously, was a space that I had to negotiate throughout the duration of this research.

PART II:

In this section, the nature of ‘sugar daddy’ relationships (SDRs) will be examined through a critical realist discourse analysis of young women at Wits engaging in them. Further, notions of intimacies such as love, pleasure and desire will also be explored. The changing political economy of sex and implications for sexual economies are also noted. The relations to HIV/AIDS knowledge and implications of HIV perception and infection risk will additionally, be scrutinized. Throughout this analysis, structural influences and how the young women navigated them in their discourses will be integrated

Chapter 4: Background and Setting of ‘Sugar Daddy’ Relationships at The University of the Witwatersrand

“Uhm, I think it’s in the way we were socialized. It’s like your mom and your family. Like you see this and you do it and you kinda just grow up with it. When you’re a little bit older you can make up your mind how you wanna be portrayed. I never really noticed it but at some point, it just happened. But I just became feminine. And of course, what you see on TV and the media. I think if I hadn’t seen, I don’t know, American programmes, I think I might be a totally different person. I might like different things, you know”.

-Lindiwe

An outline of the demographic features of the women in this study was given as well as rudimentary observations of the on-campus, all-female residence setting as a space for SDR initiation and maintenance. Through an interplay of structure and agency, a CRDA supported that the structural milieu that composed the social reality of the young women greatly informed the sexual constructs and interaction of them as social actors. A political economy of sex situated the influences of the messages being sent by the family institution. It further provided a socio-economic and political background mediating the reception of messages from mass media and peer groups within the university setting. I argue that this milieu also facilitated an environment conducive to SDR cultivation by way of the independence young women gained living away from home in the economic and social epicenter of Johannesburg but concurrently being

financially dependent on their families. SDRs became a viable option for young women and a way in which they appropriated constructs of their sexuality.

4.1 Social Setting

All of the students were enrolled at Wits in the pursuance of undergraduate or postgraduate degrees. All participants self-identified under the category, black African with one exception who self-identified as Coloured, with an age range between 20 and 27 years. With the exception of one woman, they all lived or recently lived at one of two all-female residences located on campus or resided in other residence both on and off campus. One young woman, Kagiso, lived with relatives residing in Johannesburg.

Fieldnotes obtained from frequent surveillance of the two on-campus, all-female residences revealed that these two spaces were a breeding ground for meetings between female residents and older men. Based on observations, the men who often came to the residences appeared to be much older than the average student pursuing a tertiary education. Every night of the week between 6pm and 11pm, cars frequented the parking lots where young women would either be picked up or engage in conversations with the older men. A common occurrence was the reception of identifiable items such as fast food or groceries. Particularly on weekends, groups of young women dressed in going-out attire would be picked up for the evening. The cars were consistently of the higher-end brands BMW, Audi and Volkswagen. This preliminary surveillance supports that all-female residences at Wits were fertile grounds for SDR initiation and maintenance. The young women who were a part of this study not only confirmed that this was indeed, the case, they held that the university setting was also a space where social networks facilitating SDR cultivation were very strong.

4.2 Structural Influences Informing the Sexuality of Young Women

Within a context of a political economy of sex, the institution of the family, mass media and peer pressures within an urban, university setting were analyzed.

4.2.1 The Political Economy of Sex

Framing SDRs in a larger structural context raises the issue of the political economy of sex. In a country recently liberated and still recovering from apartheid and remnants of colonialism, the deterioration of social institutions has resulted in a severe ‘structural violence’ against marginalized and disenfranchised populations in South Africa, intersecting with race, gender and ethnicity (Farmer 2004, Parker 2001). This has had an intense impact on the political economy of the country. Political economy is here defined as “systems in which diverse political and economic processes and policies impact upon communities and cultures, shaping health and well-being as well as the possibilities for agency, self-determination and sexual freedom (Parker 2009)”. A political economy of sex therefore, entails the ways and means societies inform sexual interactions between individuals through specified implicit and explicit stipulations imposed by sexual cultures in addition to political and economic power relations that fortify them (Lancaster & di Leonardo 1997, Parker 2001, 2009). The structures outlined here are all contributing institutions to the political economy of sex in South Africa. These structures greatly influenced, informed and appropriated the young women’s constructions of sexuality within their SDRs. Additionally, a CRDA framed the manner in which a political economy of sex impacted the power differentiation that young women entered SDRs. It further underscored the constraints that this structural milieu placed on young women’s choices within sexual encounters with their SDs and how they navigated these restraints.

4.2.2 Family

Family frequently served as an institution that reinforced traditional and ethnic cultural views of gender and sexuality. With no exception, none of the families of the young women knew of their SDRs. This was largely due to the stigma and negative judgment associated with such unions. Lindiwe, 3rd year student hailing from Durban expressed,

I don’t know. I’m conflicted and torn because I don’t...not that I don’t want to see his family but I mean, but you can tell that he’s a little bit older than me and I’m still very young, I’m 20. So...not that I don’t want to be seen with him...but I’m always wary about being in public with him because I have family here who would not approve...at all! But at the same time I’m having so much fun and I like this guy.

The advice of Zinhle's mother exemplified messages being sent in regards to gender roles and also expressed the conflict of these views with her own,

Like now I'm in a situation where I'm about to get married and your mother will come tell you that you have to be more submissive to your husband....and you're like 'what!'. You know like if you want to grow a family, you must listen to your fiancé and stuff like that. In a sense, I don't believe that. I believe that I must speak my mind. You know, we're equal in a relationship. So if someone comes and your mother comes and tells you that you have to be more submissive and listen to your fiancé..., yah I think she must be someone who doesn't conform if it's against her beliefs, you know. And...yeah she must work hard. She mustn't expect people to do things for her. Especially men. she mustn't say, you know I'm depending on this, she must stand up for herself.

Lerato also recalled,

It's sad cause you like, you know, before, and I don't know if it's just been lately, but we would never stand for infidelity. We would tell ourselves that we can't, you know. But if you consider our parents, before my mom got divorced, she sat through a whole lot of issues. I was like why didn't she leave? But women before like my grandmother, there would be no divorce. They would sit there and mainly because the man provided. They knew that everything needed for the house was fine. Now, take South Africa or anywhere in the world wherever, you get men who really don't....you get a man who is one of means... And then you're forced to turn a blind eye.

Throughout their narratives, young women drew extensively on the experience of past generations and how they incorporated them into their understandings of gender, sexuality and SDRs. Furthermore, female relatives, mothers in particular, often sent explicit messages as Zinhle's mother did of socially acceptable ways of constructing and enacting sexuality as young women. They also sent implicit messages through the witnessed experiences many young women recounted of their female relatives and the gender roles they adhered to in their relationships. These messages often conflicted and reinforced their own but, overall, were drawn upon in their constructions. Like Zinhle, many women expressed adamant disagreement with this submissive and dependent role of women and actively challenged. SDRs as a whole were often seen as a way of acquiring material gain historically denied to them and to older women in their families (Hawkins et al 2005, Leclerc-Madlala 2004).

4.2.3 Mass Media

Mass media was cited as having a major influence on the young women and how they perceived themselves. Claims of mass media being strong influence on a standard of beauty and an aesthetic were made. The influx of Hip Hop culture and popular Western culture into South Africa was understood to be a large influential structure, particularly at this stage of their lives. Nombeko, originally from the Eastern Cape and pursuing a masters degree, felt that popular culture and the media had a great impact on her choices and aspirations,

And that's the thing. How can you not aspire to that? Have you heard of the 'Beyoncé syndrome'? Like, you see Beyoncé on TV and she's always stunning, like, always looking like perfection, you know? Everybody loves her music, I don't care. And then she sings songs like Irreplaceable and that other one, uhm, Independent Women, or whatever, and it's like, that's...that's what we want to be like, you know? You want to be glamorous and like, be able to hold your own.

Simone succinctly said,

*People don't even understand that...these women you see in hip hop magazines have a whole team. Make-up, clothes, hair. All of it. They have professionals who spend hours on them. So it's not real, what we see on TV. It's just an illusion...but we know this and we try anyway *smile.*

Popular culture had projected images of an ideal femininity in a context of materialism and an aesthetic that many of the young women sought to emulate. Supported by Leclerc-Madlala's (2004) findings, this was interpreted as being indicative of a particular modernity which manifested in material items and conceptions of a glamorous lifestyle. The media influence was evident with the reference to the 'Beyonce Syndrome'. This superstar, the embodiment of materiality, beauty and independence was the epitome of femininity that many of the young women aspired to. Fortified by peer pressure, peer groups who drew upon these ideals and possessed resources to aspire to them, set a standard that many of the young women also felt a need to attain.

The recent influx of mass media content into South Africa has had a monumental impact on youth cultures and their norms and ideals. Particularly because this content is largely from Western popular culture, there was a trend within these youth cultures towards the attainment of standards of beauty which were essentially linked to ideas of femininity. Reference to a

'Beyoncé Syndrome' personified these ideas. Young women were being infiltrated with messages from mass media upholding the ideal femininity in the context of modernity and a specific standard of beauty. This illustrated a link between conceptions of sex and power (McRobbie 1993). As this was being perpetuated by youth cultures and the peer groups of these young women, the pressures to 'compete' in this social environment appealed to young women.

4.2.4 University Setting and Peer Pressure

While young women did contest conformity in regards to prevalent behaviours of their peers, they were highly conscious of the social standards held by their peers and their efforts to attain them. Particularly, this was the case upon arrival to the university setting. Though challenged, general peer groups, especially at Wits, had a strong influence on aspects of the identity and sexuality of the young women. Furthermore, they were a source of pressures to 'fit in'. Lerato relayed that she was not one to be subjected to direct peer pressures and ultimately engaged in certain activities of her own volition,

Matter of fact, I don't believe in peer pressure. At the end of the day, I think you make that choice, you know. Fine, you might like to do it but you're not obliged to do it. You can choose not to. For example, let me say smoking. A lot of my friends smoke but, you know. It's a trend. A whole lot of women smoke in Joburg. Everyone smokes!... But at the end of the day you choose to smoke or not.

Conversely, in other situations, she later admitted to entertaining ideas of conformation,

'Cause people really like, you know, like to look good. 'Cause you know, when I got to varsity, jeans and a t-shirt. I used to wear this t-shirt to class and my roommate would get so upset. She was like, 'put on a top!' you know, and I'd be like, 'why! I'm just going here.' ... And later on you start thinking maybe I need to start dressing that way for boys. That attention, so you're like maybe I should just like, wear a dress today or whatever, you know. Like I think it's like a...it's probably like a trap you fall into.

When asked if she ever felt peer pressures, Zinhle responded,

No. the thing is I'm this type of person that if I don't wanna do something, I won't do it. If I do something, I wanted to do it cause it's my decision. I've never had that problem ever. Even in high school. I've never had that problem where I do something because someone else is doing it.

Zinhle also admitted to insecurities as a result of peer pressures,

Yah! That part [peer pressure], yah. Like when you get to res...especially at [residence] it can be so....the girls have nice clothes, they have weaves and you look at your clothes and they look so poor. And you're like, you know, 'what happened to me'? I really need to make myself presentable'. Yah, that part I really felt.

Both Lerato and Zinhle reacted in different ways to peer pressures. While they spoke of actively disregarding the expectations of their peers and choosing not to engage in certain behaviours, they also expressed specific feelings of insecurity and uncertainty in regards to clothing and associated constructs of femininity. They expressed feeling inadequate in comparison to their female peers and their more stylish and effeminate clothing. As Zinhle relayed of her experience upon arrival at residence, the young women conveyed sentiments of the particular peer pressures that they encountered at Wits. Aesthetic standards directly related to clothing and hairstyle were held to be social markers of femininity as seen with Lerato's experience. Peer pressures in the university environment had substantial influences on the young women's self- and sexual identity. Yet, they did assert autonomy in regards to common peer behaviour such as smoking for example.

'The Big City'-Johannesburg as Land of Opportunity

Young women considered Johannesburg to be the economic hub of South Africa. The city was repeatedly characterized as a space of greater opportunities in terms of lucrative employment and access to resources. None of the young women interviewed were actually from Johannesburg. Most were from rural areas, small towns or other cities throughout the country where the opportunities available in Johannesburg were not as attainable. Furthermore, they had recently relocated here for the predominating reason of pursuing a tertiary education at Wits. However, few expressed sentiments of returning to their places of origin as Johannesburg was understood to be a place to start a career and a new life.

The 'big city lights' mentality prevailed throughout the narratives as Johannesburg was perceived to not only be an urban space with greater economic prospects, it was also characterized as a place 'larger than life'. A resulting culture shock and adaptation to this new

environment was spoken of. Originally from a small town in Limpopo province, Lerato commented on her adjustment to the city,

It was more like, emotional. I felt like life just came and hit me. I had to like, deal with all of these things at the same time. The transition of living in a small town to living in a big city.

Moving from the city of Welkom in the Free State, Sizani spoke of being overwhelmed during the first few months of her relocation to Johannesburg,

Eish. It was such a shock, hey. It really...All of a sudden I'm in a place where everything is always moving, all the time. So quickly. My senses were overloaded. Completely. Things like the Vodacom Tower I had only seen on TV and now I can walk to it if I wanted. It wasn't easy at first. But now I like it.

Phathu, whose family relocated to Johannesburg from Venda two years ago, simply stated.

It was so glamorous!

Prior to moving to Johannesburg, ideas of the 'big city' had been solidified in the minds of the young women. Along with this came perceptions of being in a place riddled with crime, danger and deception. On this, Phathu added,

Everybody knows Joburg...even if you've never been this side, you know. It's Joburg! Yah, you see the buildings and stuff on TV. Like in District 9 and whatever. But it also has a reputation as being...like, as this dangerous place. There's so much crime. So yah, you've got to watch yourself too.

Lindiwe spoke of the high aesthetic standards she encountered in Johannesburg,

Because (where I'm from) in Durban, you know, everyone is chilled, but then you come here and everyone has fake hair and looks amazing. So you're like, 'well, maybe I should try that'.

Vernacular nicknames like 'Joburg' were all endearingly used to refer to this city as not only being the economic capital of Africa but a land of greater prospects and material gain, all leading to happiness. As a 'glamorous' city, Joburg was imaged as a place where standards of beauty were higher, instilling a desire in the young women to dress in a particular way and to attain certain hairstyles. This was incited by a need to fit the projected image of a glamorous Johannesburg. However, there was also the idea of Johannesburg being the land of danger. This

was a space where insurmountable fortune could be experienced or overwhelming danger. Both contributed to Joburg being characterized as a place of extremes.

4.3 Structural Influences Facilitating ‘Sugar Daddy’ Relationships

Within the larger context of the previously discussed structural milieu, the independence of living away from home in Johannesburg and simultaneously being financially dependent on others for support contributed to young women selecting SDRs as a means to offset the lack of resources desired to maintain a certain lifestyle.

4.3.1 Independence Away From Home

Moving away from familial and community spaces and networks, usually for the first time, to a university residential environment within the big city, presented pressures and prospects that would otherwise not be a reality for the young women at Wits. Zinhle, originally from Randfontein in the Westrand disclosed,

Yeah, the minute, I mean, the minute you get here, you're at res, you know, uh, you don't have a curfew and you don't have to tell anyone where you're going and you don't have to answer to anyone when you come back so yeah...

She continued,

But again, I see it as a bad thing as well... You take advantage and you start doing things you're not supposed to do and yeah.

Sesi recently moved to Randfontein from Orange Farm. Now in her 3rd year at Wits, she recalled her experiences upon arriving in Johannesburg and living in residence,

My first year here was hectic! I just lost my mind. You just misbehaved. It's not cool, hey. I partied every night 'cause there was always something going on. Every night. I'll be honest...I'll admit, I did things I'm not proud of but that's life, I guess...

Things like what?

Just drinking, you know. Partying. Sex. One night stands and the like. Yeah, things like that...and just not putting in the right amount of time in my studies. It was a hectic year.

Engaging in activities that one wasn't 'supposed to' characterized narratives on the newly acquired independence and freedom that accompanied living away from home. Here, assertions of agency still faced the constraints of socially stigmatized behaviour. Being in a space where these young women were not subjected to such restrictions as curfews, admittedly allowed many of them to 'misbehave'. Thus, while the young women saw their newfound freedom to be a positive aspect, they also expressed that the choices that they now exercised often resulted in behaviour, such as partying excessively, drinking and engaging in short-term sexual activities generally understood by them as being taboo and immoral. The 'Big City' was featured as a place to explore newfound autonomy and Johannesburg and the university residence environment provided the peer groups and social settings to do so.

4.3.2 Financial Dependence

With the exceptional case of Kagiso, all young women were financially dependent and continued to be reliant on their parents. While two women reported having part-time employment, the majority were unemployed, full-time students dependent on another source for financial support.

Nombeko claimed,

My mother does everything for me right now. Whenever...if I need food or whatever, she'll send [money]. She does what she can to make sure that I'm as comfortable as possible, you know. She wants me to do well in school so yah, she does her best.

This was the most common financial situation of most of the students, even those who did not live in residence. As Nombeko reiterated, the basic needs of all of the young women were provided for by their families who were able to ensure they were 'as comfortable as possible' during their period of study away from home. This reinforces that SDRs were not 'survival sex' but were engaged for purposes of consumption (Hunter 2002, Kaufman & Stavrou 2002, Kuate-Defo 2004, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Luke 2002, 2003). Kagiso, 27, who had moved from Mpumalanga to Johannesburg with her young daughter, was currently living with relatives. Being a mature student who decided to return to school to secure a degree as 'something to fall back on', she was the exception as she asserted that her SD had paid her school fees for the academic year. She stated,

But I'm, the thing is I'm in this relationship with this man 'cause I sort of needed help with my studying, like my fees.

Kagiso explicitly outlined the direct nature of her relationship with her SD as the source for the provision of her basic needs.

Johannesburg was portrayed as a place where there was opportunity in terms of the potential to accumulate finances, access commodities and where there was a deeply entrenched consumer culture largely due to the greater 'flow' of resources. Simultaneously, Johannesburg's inherent dangers were a reality as expressed by women in the engagement of partying, sexual activities and other aspects of a 'fast life'. This idealized lifestyle was conveyed through the glamourization of materialism and conspicuous consumption and indulgence. All in all, messages were continuously being received both in the city and prior to arrival by young women new to this environment of Johannesburg being the 'mecca' for the indulgence of this type of lifestyle. While all young women were in the city to further their studies, Johannesburg was strongly depicted as favourable for the aforementioned reasons and not the primary reason they were currently living in the city; education. The peer pressures expressed in regard to clothing as a marker of social status and femininity created a situation where young women had feelings of not fitting in with their peer groups. Financial dependence as students, nevertheless, prevented the women from acquiring enough resources to pursue this lifestyle perpetuated in Johannesburg, particularly within youth cultures. Alternative means of generating income, a part-time job for example, were not communicated by most women as a consideration.

This chapter set the background and social setting in which SDRs took place. Though structural influences outlined here were not comprehensive, each were intricately interlinked and affected by others. In line with Archer's approach to structure and agency, this summary served to outline the institutional forces in which the young women in SDRs were navigating and provided a larger context of structures that were informing their constructs of sexuality. A CRDA held that within a political economy of sex, the institution of the family, mass media and peer pressures within a university setting were drawn upon in constructing a social milieu of the environment

the young women understand and experience their sexuality. Further, I argue that the independence of being away from home and simultaneously, still being financially dependent on family at home created a situation conducive to SDR initiation as young women were not under the direct control of family but were unable to meet social pressures from peers and the urban environment because of their lack of resources. This, by no means, suggests that such criteria inevitably lead to SDR. However, it produces a situation where it becomes a more viable option. Throughout this study, a CRDA will allow for further exploration into ways in which young women enact agency in their mediation of these outlined structures in regards to their constructs of sexuality within SDRs. This also provides a framework to analyze the complexity of power relations in SDRs and how it was continuously being exerted and restrained.

Chapter 5: ‘Sugar Daddy’ Relationships

“Yeah, as I told you...the thing is I’m in this relationship with this man ‘cause I sort of needed help with my studying, like my fees. And also I have a daughter and the father is an ass so he’s kind of like a provider more than anything. Yah, that’s partly the reason why I’m in it. Not to sound like a bad person or anything but...it’s just the reality of my life right now.”

- Kagiso

Through the fusion of focus groups of women who were in SDRs and those who were not and individual in-depth interviews, what actually constitutes an SDR is explored by comparing it to given ideas of ‘prostitution’. Three key features comprising a definition of SDRs are also put forth in addition to reasons as to why young women engaged this type of transactional sex. Further, the nature of SDRs is detailed within the context of the processes of initiation, duration and termination.

5.1. Is it Prostitution?

Of great interest was the fact that the word ‘prostitution’ itself was invoked by women in all three SDR and non-SDR focus group discussions alike, as opposed to the term ‘sex worker’. The negative connotations associated with the former label demonstrated the stigma of immorality surrounding this form of transaction (Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Wojcicki 2002). From the focus groups, all women, including those in SD relationships and those who were not, understood ‘prostitution’ to be reflective of moral degeneracy. Further, there was an understanding that any transaction that involved money being directly exchanged for sex was considered to be socially taboo. Thus, women perceived to be engaging in this type of activity would also bear the burden of this stigma. The first position of students not engaging SDR held that ‘prostitution’ and SDRs were to be classified as ultimately, the same thing. This was demonstrated in the following quotes from the focus group composed of young students not engaging in SDR:

Tola: So...how would you define a ‘sugar daddy’ relationship?...What would be the main characteristics? What would qualify as a ‘sugar daddy’ relationship?

NSF-1: I would say it’s straight prostitution. Honestly...it is.

NSF-2: Yah..you know, the reality is money is being given for sex. It may not come in the same way...but I think, ultimately, it's, it equates to prostitution.

In addition to this association, there were related negative connotations.

I just don't understand it. Do you need money that badly that you would compromise your body like that?...I just really...I don't get it.

NSF-3: Babes, you don't care about yourself.

However, within SD focus groups, the second position raised a strong sentiment that SD and transactional sex relationships in general, could not be equated with 'prostitution'. This perspective stemmed from the belief that young women in SDRs were also engaging in an intimate relationship as opposed to a one-off, sex-money exchange (Hunter2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2002, MacPhail & Campbell 2001, Wood & Jewkes 2001). Young women gave firm explanations as to why their relationships could not be categorized as a form of 'prostitution'. This was namely, due to the interest of their personal well-being by their SDs, the commodities being given, and that they did not require basic necessities.

SF1-2: I'm not a prostitute. I'm definitely not that. This man doesn't just put the money on the table and expect sex from me. It's...it's not like that for sure.

SF2-2: [Prostitution is] dangerous, hey. You see them in Hillbrow and places like that. It's not safe. Walking the street and picking up men off the street. It's dangerous, yah. I would never do that.

In agreement with this statement,

SF2-1: I can't even imagine something like that. It's very dangerous. Like, it really is. Any man can come and do whatever he wants if he's not happy. He could beat her, and there's nothing...she couldn't do anything. My boyfriend would never do that to me. He just...I know him better than that.

SF1-4: Any man who would let his woman do that ['prostitute'] is just wrong. My man would kill me! I would never, ever do that anyway.

Again, Johannesburg was characterized as a 'dangerous' space where a woman can easily be taken advantage of. While male clients of 'prostitutes' were the perpetrators of these inherent dangers, here, young women constructed the SD as a protector or a shield against them.

Because money was viewed as an impersonal and ‘cold’ unit for trade, sexual relationships where it is directly exchanged were regarded within the same context (Zelizer 2005). The type of commodity being transacted was perceived to be related to a certain type of relationship.

‘Prostitution’ entailed a strict, formal exchange of sex for money. Conversely, gifts, favours, and services were the most common mediums of exchange in SDR (Hunter2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2002, MacPhail & Campbell 2001, Wood & Jewkes 2001). Hard currency, such as Rands, was not as frequently given. As SF1-4 articulated, young women used this to differentiate themselves from this group,

SF1-4: They need the money. Yah. Money is what they’re asking for. I think that’s a...it can be a major difference. I don’t think they care about being taken to a nice restaurant or getting gifts and stuff like that...or driving in a nice car. They want the actual money. That’s what they’re after.

Lastly, ‘prostitution’ was characterized as being engaged by women who were attempting to attain basic essentials such as food, shelter, necessary clothing and money to take care of their dependents. Thus, it was portrayed as an occupation resulting out of dire poverty, a form of ‘survival sex’ (Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2002, 2004). Women in this line of work were classified as being poor and uneducated with little opportunity for upward economic mobility. Ultimately, they were understood to be disempowered because of their socio-economic status. Overall, this contributed to the stigma associated with ‘prostitution’ and was further used by young women as a distinguishing factor.

SF2-2: You know what, it’s not an easy life. And I don’t think these women want to be doing those things. They don’t have too much choice...or education. How many graduated matric? Or could go to varsity...?

SF2-1: Plus they have kids to feed, ne. Or a mother or younger brother or whatever to support back home...it’s crazy sometimes. I don’t think they chose to do this. There probably wasn’t too much of a choice.

It was evident that there was a deeply rooted social stigmatization of any form of exchange perceived as sex work (Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). This

was seen by the exclusive use of the negatively connotated word, 'prostitute'. Thus, there was a strong tendency to distance oneself and their engagement in SDRs from any form of sex work. This was demonstrated with the array of reasons given as to why SDRs can be definitively differentiated from this line of occupation. The predominating reason specified was that SDRs occur within the context of a relationship. This was reinforced by expressions that SDs 'cared' for them and wouldn't let them enter such dangerous situations. Such assertions of sentiment toward them characterized that their transaction occurred within a relationship. The young women drew upon discourses of emotional investment as a means of demonstrating that they could not be classified as 'prostitutes'. Also of importance was the distinction between the kinds of commodities being exchanged. The direct transaction of money implied a lack of involvement and intimacy which further distanced women in SDR from 'prostitution'.

While prostitutes were perceived to be selling sex as a commodity in order to attain basic necessities, reasons given by women in SDRs were also designated as 'needs'. While I uphold that any form of transactional sex does not readily fit into definitions of 'prostitution', this further supports that the primary reason for this distinction made between 'prostitutes' and themselves was more of a distancing mechanism rather than a true differentiation.

5.2 'Needs' vs. Consumption

In regards to reasons young women engaged in SDR, the 'needs' vs. consumption debate arose. One of the aforementioned distinctions between SDRs and 'prostitution' was based on the acquisition of basic necessities. 'Prostitutes' were understood to be selling sex in order to attain food, shelter, essential clothing and to support their dependents. However, in contradiction to this distinction, several young women in focus groups constructed their reasons for engaging in SDR as a means of accessing certain 'needs'.

SF1-3: He helps me out. He helps me when, when I need it. If I want to go out with my friends or buy Nando's or something lol...he helps me. He'll say, 'no, you must go out with your friends, you must just tell me', you know. Me sitting at home while they all go out. It's not nice, hey. He understands that I need to socialize and just be young sometimes! He gets it.

More blatantly, SF2-2 also deemed a reason to engage in SDR was to access ‘needs’,

SF2-2: Look, I’m straight. I’m the kind of person who likes to shop. Needs it even! It’s nice to be with someone who...who can help me with that. I don’t care, call me whatever. But shopping is a need for me! I can’t function without it...retail therapy lol.

From a critical perspective and in reference to media influence, SF1-3 queried,

Well, what exactly is a ‘need’ anyway? I mean, you here those kids on ‘My Sweet 16’ say, ‘well, I need my iPod, I need this Lexus or whatever. Yah, I don’t know, I think the term is relative.

However, the dominant motive given for seeking out SDRs was for access to material items of consumption and a particular lifestyle, not basic necessities. This was disclosed by SF1-3 in her explanation for her pursuit of material items,

*SF1-3: Uhm, I know that what I get out of it is basically, like, stuff. I’m not gonna say, sit here and say that it’s stuff I need. More like it’s what I want. I mean, anyone can live on pap and chicken and vegetables or whatever *laugh...but would you if you don’t have to? Why wouldn’t you go after the steak, you know what I’m saying. Plus, I think, like, I’m a strong believer that a man who cares for you and can do it, should be giving you the finer things in life, you know. You shouldn’t struggle if you don’t have to.*

SF1-4: Yah... Men should be providing the finer things in life for you. I know, my boyfriend, he exposes me to a lifestyle that I can’t really get to right now. My friends too, those who have ‘sugar daddies’, they get to live a lifestyle that they can’t afford at the moment. It teaches you a lot.

The word ‘need’ was used in loose terms among young women deeming the resources they acquire through their SDs as basic necessities. A popular definition would qualify food, shelter and essential clothing as ‘basic necessities’. However, in the context given, items and services categorized as ‘needs’ did not readily fit into this definition. Such needs more accurately met the criteria of wants or desires. Based on the descriptions given, a ‘need’, in this context, would better be defined as a material item or service that reduced the chances of the young women experiencing discomfort or struggle in their daily student lives. This was within a situation where financial limitations and strict budgeting would otherwise be their reality. Whatever lifestyle was normalized by them, any resource that allowed them to maintain it was often labeled as a ‘need’. In this respect, shopping sprees, eating out and entertainment qualified as ‘needs’. The young women’s understanding of needs further supports that SDRs were engaged for the purposes of

consumption and pursuit of a lifestyle considered to be more modern (Hunter 2002, Kaufman & Stavrou 2002, Kuate-Defo 2004, Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Luke 2002, 2003).

In direct contradiction to needs being a differentiating factor of their relationships and 'prostitution', young women characterized their reasons for engaging SDRs as a way of acquiring 'needs'. Characterizing received gifts and favours as necessities served as a validation of their SDRs, justifying their involvement in these relationships. This construction of material items as 'needs' also directly contradicted the given differentiating factor from 'prostitution' as being a way of accessing basic necessities.

5.3 What is a 'Sugar Daddy' Relationship?

Three main features arose from in-depth interviews, forming the foundation for a definition of 'sugar daddy' relationships and distinguishing it from other forms of transactional sex and from 'prostitution'. The transaction, namely, the access to resources as the *predominant* reason of engaging SDRs, the age difference (Luke 2003) and a resulting generation disparity and power differentials between the young women and their older male counterparts, and the fact that SDRs occurred within the context of a relationship (Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madlala 2002) were outlined as defining features of SDR.

5.3.1 No Resources...No Relationship

In the individual in-depth interviews, one of the fundamental features spoken of that characterized a SDR was that once the SDs ceased to adhere to his end of the transaction; to contribute gifts, favours and other resources, the young women no longer made an effort to maintain or engage in the relationship (Nyanzi et al 2000, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). This either took the form of explicitly ending all relations or directing their efforts to initiate other more lucrative SD partnerships in replacement of former ones. Hailing from the northern region of Limpopo province, Phathu stated when posed with the question on what course of action she would take if resources were no longer available from her SD,

I would see...but no, if it was for a long period of time, I don't know. I would see.

Tola: And if it was for a long period of time?

I think I would probably have to leave. I'm young and still have a long way to go.

A first year student at an all-female residence originally from Cape Town, Simone referred to her stance in regards to the lawyer who was her SD,

Let's just be real about it. I'm with him for the things he gives me, and all the places we go to. If that stops, well, that's it, really. I think we could still be friends though.

Lerato supported ending her relationship once the resources were permanently terminated,

I'd still be with him. It would be a tooooooouugh one, but I would. Like it's one of those, he must also show me that 'I'm working on getting it back, I'm working on, you know, standing on my own two feet so I can provide for you....'

And if he wasn't?

HA!! I'm leaving.

Zinhle, who lived with her SD, the father of her child and her fiancé, was at a stage of apparent permanency with him. However, upon further investigation, she later admitted,

He must provide.

Tola: What if he can't?

I'm a student with a baby...I would have to find an alternative.

Tola: What alternative?

Someone who can provide.

Uniformly, young women affirmed that they would either actively or passively terminate the relationship once there was a permanent cessation of resources and favours. The transaction itself was therefore, the predominant reason of the involvement of SDRs.

A contradiction arose here as one of the characteristics referred to as a differentiating factor from young women engaging in SDR from 'prostitutes' was that there was more to their relationships

than individuals who strictly sold sex. Because their transaction occurred within the context of a relationship, it could not be likened to 'prostitution'. However, the women here declared that once their older partners ceased to give money, gifts and favours, the relationship would be terminated. Again, because of the stigma associated with sex work, reducing the predominant reason of engagement in SDR to the access of resources would lead to an association to 'prostitution'.

Several women expressed giving their partners a chance to recover if they were no longer able to provide resources. However, if this period of time was indefinite the most popular decision was to leave. Remaining in the relationship irrespective of their SDs giving them items was not raised as a viable option.

5.3.2 Age Difference and Generation Disparity

A large age disparity was another fundamental characteristic of SD relationships documented in the individual interviews. The age of female students ranged between 20 to 27 years. For their partners, the given age range was between 30 to 38 years. The age difference range between young women and their older male partners was between 10-13 years (refer to Appendix A).

All of the young women were involved with men who were significantly older than themselves. I speculate that this is due to older men having more earning power and time to accumulate resources that their younger male counterparts, particularly students, did not as several women specified that they could not date a student due to this distinction.

Lindiwe held,

Yeah, I don't know if I could date a student.

Tola: How come?

I don't know, I feel almost lucky to be dating this guy. All of my past boyfriends were working and I feel like I'm getting exposed to so many things.

Tola: ...So there are more resources.

Exactly! Lol

While the average age difference was between 10-13 years old, this range was not solely representative of an age difference but also of a generation disparity. The discrepancy of knowledge and experience between the women and their partners was raised. Zinhle spoke of moments when this disparity was evident,

Sometimes, it's an issue when, you know, you get other situations when maybe you don't understand what he's saying, you know. 'Cause you're still young. You don't get it, you just don't get it.

In regards to her SD, Lindiwe also expressed instances where age disparity was apparent when posed with this question,

I have so much energy! Like the other night I was gonna go out with a friend after work and then uhm, and he was just at home. I just have all this energy and he just goes to bed early and he's like tired. I see it then but not really like, in our conversation. Yes, he's wise and smart but sometimes we just click. Of course, he's older and has more experiences but it's cool.

Lerato felt that there were clear times when the generation disparity was apparent. For her, these moments not only highlighted how she perceived him but also how she suspected he perceived her as a significantly younger woman,

I have noticed the age difference and I do get...in the sense that we're at two different stages of life, you know. He has like, 12 years beyond what I have so he's obviously experienced more and I could have never kept up with him. And at the same time you know, like I would be thinking about our conversations and be like, you know when we speak does he think like, 'this girl has really got a lot to go through in life', you know. 'She's really, she's really complaining about the most simple things in life'.

She further pointed out times when she felt the power dynamic of the age difference,

You know when...it's easy for them to put you in your place and you're just like, 'okay', you know. But I don't know, it's just those things that worry me considering that he is older and has money. But he doesn't do anything purposely to make me feel that way.

Kagiso highlighted the advantageous aspects of the age disparity between her and her SD,

'Cause I mean, seeing as he is also older, he advises me a lot on issues of life, finance, education, you know, family if I have a problem there. And really, he understands that I've got a kid and he always asks about her.

As a power dynamic, the age range became more emphasized when approached as a generation disparity and not simply an age difference as much of the literature outlines (Luke 2003, 2008). SDs were not only individuals who possessed more in terms of resources but who had also experienced more. The generation disparity resulted in young women feeling that their SDs and themselves were at 'different stages in life' producing a situation where there was a gap in knowledge, experience and a difference in interests. The young women portrayed them as having acquired more wisdom and the ability to advise on life issues. This life experience was a capital that they themselves, who 'just didn't get it' at times, did not have. I put forth here that SDs having acquired greater financial and experiential capital than their younger partners due to the generation disparity brings inherent power dynamics into the relationships in addition to gendered power differentials. Young women characterized their SDs as advisors, wiser individuals and authority figures and substantiated these power dynamics brought into their SDRs. However, this topic did reveal a gap in this research. While age difference has been documented in the literature, the power dynamics and how they manifest within SD relationships here, is an area that needs further study.

5.3.3 The Context of a Relationship

The fact that the first two fundamental characteristics occurred within the context of a relationship was an integral attribute that is extremely underdocumented in the social science literature. This aspect of a transaction transpiring within a relationship necessitated this to be a main focal point of this type of partnering. There are poignant expressions of love, friendship, desire and pleasure implicitly and explicitly spoken of throughout conversations related to the relationships of the young women. Also of great significance was that the women themselves formulated their transactions within the construction of a relationship. The terminology utilized in reference to their partner and the transactions itself was more indicative of an intimate union and not a strictly sexual-economic transaction. For example, older male partners were often interchangeably referred to as 'boyfriends', 'my man' or 'partners' as opposed to 'clients' (Hunter 2002). Further, the transaction was labeled as 'providing' rather than, 'giving money'. However, the use of the term SD was contextualized but also frequently used interchangeably with the other terms though it was usually avoided in conversations associated with

‘prostitution’. While elements of intimacy were prevalent, what distinguished SDRs from any union where money and other resources are given within a sexually intimate relationship is that the resources were the *predominant* reason as to why these relationships were being engaged. Thus, despite intimacies, once resources were no longer given, the relationship concluded. Elements of intimacy will be discussed in further detail in Chapter 7: Beyond the Transaction: Intimacies of Love, Pleasure and Desire.

5.4 Reasons for Engaging in ‘Sugar Daddy’ Relationships

Despite elements of a relationship the three key reasons identified as the predominating motive students were involved in SDRs were for resources and money, lifestyle and social status, and security.

As discussed previously, the acquisition of resources was the primary reason for SDRs. However, the exposure to a certain lifestyle and social status that otherwise could not be reached was also a strong factor. Lindiwe referred to this being an important reason herself and her friends sought out SDRs,

I think [SDRs are] just for now because they want a certain lifestyle but they can't afford it for themselves. Me as well, I can't afford it...I feel almost lucky to be dating this guy. All of my past boyfriends were working and I feel like I'm getting exposed to so many things.

As stated earlier, Zinhle named security as being the main reason she had made commitments to her SD,

I'm a student with a baby...I would have to find an alternative.

Tola: What alternative?

Someone who can provide.

The literature has entailed resources, gifts and favours as being predominating reasons for engaging in SDR. However, in an urban setting such as Johannesburg, other motivations such as maintaining a grandeur lifestyle and a higher social status along with reasons of security, are in need of further study. Again, Johannesburg is characterized as a place where particular lifestyles

and status are achievable. However, it is also a space where security from given dangers is often needed. Additionally, as discussed earlier, money was not transacted as often as the other forms of resources due to its association with a lack of interest and intimacy. Material gain in SDRs was thus, more frequently acquired in the form of gifts, favours, and social status. Overall, the attainment of basic necessities was not quoted as being reasons for SDR engagement.

5.5 Initiation/Duration/Termination of ‘Sugar Daddy’ Relationships

The nature of SDRs was explored through phases of initiation, duration and termination as this is also underdocumented in the literature.

5.5.1 Initiation

Through friends in their social groups and out in public social spaces were the two main processes discussed as the major ways that relationships were initiated. Several women were introduced to their current partners through female friends in their immediate social networks. On occasion, these friends were also in SDRs and instigated an introduction of these young women to one of their partners’ friends. Phathu met her SD through a close friend with whom her own partner was friends with,

Yeah, my friend, she’s my good friend from res days. She was like, ‘I got someone for you’. So one night her man brought him through to our place. He was really nice to me, a perfect gentleman. We exchanged numbers...he called a few days later...and then that...the rest is history as they say...sometimes we all chill ‘cause we’re cool, you know. It’s a, it’s like a double date kind of thing.

Lindiwe, also recounted how her relationship was initiated,

Uhm, my bestfriend who I told you about has a friend who was his friend. So they all went out for dinner and another time they said come out to dinner with me, I’ve got someone for you. So we all went out to dinner together and we started talking. Nothing happened for awhile but he phoned me out of the blue and then we started going out, you know, that kind of thing, going for dinner....he doesn’t really go out clubbing and stuff so that’s how it started.

This type of initiation illustrated an internal social network linking relationships within the greater university student networks identified throughout this research. It not only served as a

mechanism allowing SDRs to thrive, it institutionalized them. All-female student residences at Wits were fertile grounds for the proliferation of these social networks.

Young women also described meeting SDs in a public setting such as a club or a bar. They, themselves, initiated the introduction or were approached by their potential SDs.

Kagiso relayed how she met her boyfriend,

No actually, how did I meet him? There was some....in first year, there was some clubbing event and uhm, I remember we were all together [friends] and it was like one of those big, big nights... Yah, so there was this massive line so they decided to leave. I don't know how but I stayed! Lol. So there was this little bar and I went and decided, 'oh, let me just go get a drink at the bar' and I'm all alone. Get there and this guy's standing there, 'hi, how are you?', 'Hi'....buys me a drink and I 'disappeared'. Then he was standing at the door of the club and we meet up again and the next time I bumped into him again. He was like 'hi', you know and was like 'I remember you', that was a couple of weeks later, I think. We exchanged numbers and then from there on he called.

Young women and their friends played an active role in relationship initiation by being set up or setting themselves up with older men. Contrary to earlier literature on transactional sex relationships, students attending Wits expressed their active part in the commencement of SDRs. This directly contests notions reducing young women to victims of sexual exploitation (Holland et al 1990, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). In this respect, they were active social agents in entering this type of relationship and had access to a network assisting them in doing so.

5.5.2 Duration

The duration of the young women's current relationships were on average, longer than typical relationships documented in the literature (Luke 2008). The time range for the duration of SDRs amongst the young women ranged from 1 month to more than 3 years (refer to Appendix A).

Lerato recalls her experience with her partner prior to officially dating,

He was like uhm, older and uhm, a part of me was like 'he's gonna take advantage. So everytime it would be when he'd call, like we'd have intervals. I'd speak to him this week. And speaking to him means him coming and bringing my friends and I food, taking us out and then I'd 'disappear', you know. So that he doesn't go and ask for more, for sex and whatever, you know.

Uhm, then I'd call him again and we went on our first date. Even on that date, my friends were there, my security! Like we didn't trust this guy! And you know, everytime, it was nice because he'd always spend money on us, he always provided and I was like, okay this is nice...But then he gave me an ultimatum. So he was outright about it. 'You are with me because of the money'...Then we didn't speak anymore and then recently, like, in July, and then I noticed he was a very nice guy...a very nice guy... Yeah, there was a cycle, there was a cycle for almost three years straight.

While all of the girls still claimed to be involved in a SDR and met the prerequisites of one as specified here, for several, the relationship had escalated. Most of the young women knew their partners for an extensive period of time prior to the official SDR period. Often they had interacted with their partners in the capacity of a 'casual SD' as opposed to an individual being a greater part of their daily life. The average duration of SDRs amongst the young women was longer than outlined in the literature (Luke 2008). However, this aspect of SD relationships is in need of greater interrogation.

5.5.3 Termination

As discussed earlier, the termination of a SDR was another domain where young women often played an active role. If resources were no longer accessible, then they either reduced efforts put into maintaining their relationships by avoiding calls and all other communication, or sought out more productive partnerships. Several women stated that they would give their partners a certain amount of time to recover financially due to a level of familiarity and fondness. If this did not occur, they would no longer pursue them. Young women expressed that once they stopped accepting resources, the SD eventually ceased to maintain the relationship as well as he no longer held bargaining power.

This chapter established the foundation of this study: the 'sugar daddy' relationship. Within this urban, university space, SDRs were explored with the aim of better understanding their nature. In attempts to finding a concrete definition of a SDR, it was clarified as to what it was not. The young women distanced themselves and their SDRs from 'prostitution' through distinctions of the type of commodities being transacted, their SDs caring for them and their lack of need for basic essentials. A CRDA demonstrated that this distancing largely stemmed from the social

stigmatization associated with 'prostitution'. A CRDA also revealed that the type of material resources being transacted was infused with social meaning. While there were similarities such as the primary reason of SDR engagement was to access resources, be it gifts or money, young women understood, the *form* of resources given to be an integral distinction. The two main characteristics used to differentiate SDR from 'prostitution' was the type of material resource transacted and the relationship context that it occurred. In terms of what qualified as an SDR, three main criteria were stipulated to define it. First, the transaction was the predominant reason of engaging the relationship. Second, the large age difference led to inherent power dynamics due to the resulting generation gap and disparity of financial capital. Third, the transaction occurred within the context of a relationship. The reasons young women gave for entering SDRs revealed that this type of relationship was pursued primarily for purposes of consumption and not to acquire basic needs. However, a CRDA further exposed contradiction of young women characterizing their consumptive gain as 'needs'. Again, due to social stigma surrounding 'prostitution', understanding 'prostitutes' reasons for engagement as needs served to distance themselves from them. Additionally, women upheld that they 'needed' certain resources from their SDs that would more generally be classified as wants or desires. The initiation of this type of transactional relationship was also explored uncovering a widespread social network within residence spaces facilitating and institutionalizing the pervasiveness of SDRs. The duration of SDRs was shown to be longer than expected as many women had been involved with their SDs in some capacity for a substantial period of their university careers. The average duration of SDRs illustrates the lack of a formal, 'one-off' exchange, a definitive feature of sex work, a further delineating characteristic. Moreover, a degree of affection would also be needed in order to sustain this greater length of time. Relating back to one of the main criteria of SDRs, termination of relationships stemmed from a cessation of resources. Upon this occurrence, women either passively or actively ended the relationship in search of more beneficial SDs.

Chapter 6: Sexuality and Gender

“Well, sexuality, for me is an important part of someone. You know, be it the way you dress. If you dress a certain way to express your sexuality or sex itself. Women are, they’re not open sexually. If you come across a woman, you know, who is let’s say more in touch with their sexuality and you express it publically, then you’re called names. You’re called a slut. Or if you approach a guy and you tell them you like them you’re called names. Or maybe, I don’t know, in the bedroom, if you’re more sexually aggressive or something, sometimes it might be taken as, like, maybe you’re sleeping around behind your boyfriend’s back or something like that. Yah”.

- Zinhle

6.1 Constructions of Manhood and Womanhood

Gender amongst the young women was considered to be an integral component of their sexual identities and it was strongly identified with their sexuality. Young women presented ideals of masculinity and femininity. While there were challenging constructs, most women adhered to essentialist and traditionalist views of gender.

6.1.1 Man as ‘The Provider’ and Man as ‘The Equal’

Young women constructed two main gender roles for men. Man as ‘the provider’, the individual who was responsible for providing resources and security and man as ‘the equal’ whose gender status, in terms of division of labour, was equal to that of women.

The term ‘provide’ itself was extensively used throughout this study in reference to the predominating role that the SDs played in the young women’s lives. The most overwhelming and consistent ideas of ideal manhood in SDRs were constructed around that of ‘the provider’. Here, essentialist and traditionalist views were referred to in order to qualify this perspective.

Furthermore, this construct of the provider was in the context of money and other resources as opposed to emotional support. Lerato put forth ideas of man as ‘the provider’,

And the convenience of when you need something and not lacking, you know when you need whatever and he’s always there to provide. And men are generally meant to provide for women. We are meant to be provided for. You know that’s how it’s supposed to be. And if you have a man who can fulfill that and give you extras, that’s a full man right there, you know.

Lerato also went on to make an intriguing comment,

Like, I remember a friend of mine said 'not being able to provide for my woman is like me not being able to get an erection'. That's the kind of man I want. I think it makes the man as well, that ambition or that ability to do that, you know.

Direct links were made to manhood and the provision of resources. By stating that this role is how it is 'supposed to be' further entrenched essentialist approaches to gender. Lerato appealed to this in not only describing the man's role in her relationship but also the role of the woman needing to be provided for. Equating a man's ability to provide with the functionality of the organ symbolic of manhood was a strong statement that describes the integral quality that providing for your partner held. The physical embodiment of a man's sexuality was interlinked with quintessential ideas of gender; the ability of a man to provide for his woman was equated with being able to sustain an erection. Direct links were made between manhood and his sexuality, qualifying a 'full man'.

The role of a man being the same as his partner in terms of labour division was also articulated in interviews although it was not as prevalent as the construction of man 'the provider'. However, there were emphases on a partnership where each individual helps out in regards to labour division. Thembile supported this notion,

Uh, 50/50, like I said, you help each other out. So I mean, if I can't do something, sometimes he can help me out and vice versa.

Tola: When you say 'help out', what do you mean?

It can be financially or be it being there for the person physically, emotionally or whatever.

Thembile built on this argument by adding,

He should help out so I think he...well, helping out financially, okay fine, but the guy has to play a part in the house. It doesn't necessarily mean that women are supposed to be the cleaners and cooks. If you're free on a certain day, don't just sit. Help out around the house. Do the garden, do something. Help.

Traditional roles were offset with a perspective considered to be more modern. Thembile stressed that men also need to be active in the private domain, traditionally delegated to women

(Shefer et al 2008). The man's role was characterized as being involved in whatever activity or chore that needed to be done. This rule applied to women as well. Thus, a partnership was more emphasized in this approach.

Nombeko reiterated this argument in her comment,

Women are expected to do everything, no matter what. If she has to work because there's no money, then it's fine. But if her husband loses his job and stays home, it's such a big deal. They don't, they just can't handle you making more money than they are. It's quite ridiculous. Plus, if the marriage fails, it will be her fault too. That's how people see it, you know. I'd like to think sometimes... I want it to be 50/50. He does what I can't, you know? And I do what he can't. Like that.

However, Nombeko later on drew on the 'man as the provider' discourse as well,

I guess...I guess it's just how I was raised. I mean, you. Your man is supposed to provide for you. Make sure that you are not in need. That's his job. Yah, I appreciate that. Men who do what they can to make sure you're taken care of and comfortable. Yah.

Sizani straightforwardly stated,

*This world is designed for him to make more money than you...So he should be the one providing for you. But in this day and age, women must work in order to make ends meet. So I think he should be the one providing more so. But he must help out with the kids, take them to games and whatever...because women can't be doing all of that and working anymore...plus, it's about time men did more than the women *laugh.*

Here, ideas from both 'man as the provider' and 'man as the equal' were drawn upon for the construction of the man's role.

In regards to constructions of manhood, the young women drew heavily upon traditionalist views of man as the provider. The majority of women held that this was the ideal role for men. By stating that this role was how it was 'supposed to be' further entrenched essentialist approaches to gender. Lerato, appealed to this essentialist discourse in describing the man's role and that of the woman 'needing' to be provided for. This necessity of the man being able to provide was more often spoken of in the context of finances and not particularly in other areas such as psychological or emotional provision. Reference to man as the equal was made less often than man as the provider but more within a context of division of labour and not equal financial contribution.

I argue that constructing the ideal manhood around providing fortifies the role of the SD in their relationships. All women perceived the predominant identity of their SDs as someone who provided for them. Thus, I speculate that understandings of them as the provider were readily accessible key characteristics for them to draw upon. This gender construction further validated the role that their SDs played in their relationships. Though a more modern construct was put forth as well, it did not fit into their SDRs or their social realities in general. Man as ‘the equal’ was more utilized as a challenge to traditionalist approaches as opposed to a recognized gender role.

6.1.2 Woman as ‘The Supporter/Nurturer’ and the ‘Independent Woman’

Two prevailing themes were appealed to in the construction of womanhood. Constructs of woman as ‘the supporter/nurturer’ in the relationship and the ‘independent woman’ were associated with womanhood. In the ‘independent woman’ construct, the young women conceptualized independence primarily through ownership of things and economic autonomy. The role as supporter/nurturer largely was in reference to being an emotional and psychological support system for their partner. This was touched on in the focus groups,

SF1-3: I think that women are a naturally a strong support system. And that’s what men need, you know. So, I need to be able to support him, in an emotional capacity so he is able to provide for me and the family. And want to do that, you know what I mean.

*SF1-2: Yah, I hear that. We’re just good at doing that, hey. Sometimes too good *laugh. But yah, I think because of that, we should be that support system as well.*

A woman’s role in the relationship was often constructed as the support system primarily for her partner. Additionally, she was held to be the one who nurtures and takes care of him. Essentialist and traditional discourses were drawn upon in support of this gender role. Lerato, who drew heavily on these discourses for manhood, expressed in detail the role of a woman in her SD relationship,

[She’s there] mainly as a support system. A very strong support system for the men. And we as women are nurturers. You know, we just have it in us by nature. And men, I think most men need that in a woman... You know, ‘cause they’re looking for someone who will take care of them and be there for them in all respects. That’s what men are looking for, you know. That’s why most men will say these older women act as if they don’t need them. And it’s also how society as

changed...if you look back to the times of Joseph, men were providers and they provided for their women.

Reaffirming her position on a woman's role as the support system she later added,

And like, for men, they're very simple creatures. If you take care of them, you've got them, you know. If you show them 'oh my gosh, I'm so concerned about you', they'll be happy. It's a genetic thing, you know.

Again, Lerato drew upon essentialist views on the gender role for women in her comment on men and their innate need to be nurtured. Her comment further suggests that this maneuver of taking care of and showing interest in your partner appeals to an intrinsic need to be nurtured.

Sizani elaborated on her perceptions of womanhood and the role of the 'supporter/nurturer',

Men need support. Simple. They want you to be there for them, take care of them, and just, just be there and show them that you've got their back, you know?...and women are good at that. It's just the way we are. You gotta make sure that you create a situation where he can do his best to take care of you, and provide for you. Don't nag and stuff. How is he gonna want to provide for you if you make him feel miserable about, about you, you know? Just be there for him. I'll do what I need to do to make sure he does what he needs to do.

Tola: And what do each of you need to do?

I'll take care of him sometimes. Sometimes men just want you to be there and listen to them. Just hear, just when they vent and 'oh, baby today was so crazy at work'. Run them a hot bath or give them a massage. You must support him so he feels comfortable, you know what I mean.

A more modern perspective was also put forth although it was not drawn upon to the same extent as woman as 'the supporter/nurturer'. However, the 'independent woman' was a discourse that women put forth as the ideal femininity,

*SF1-1: In this day and age, I think women should be independent. Should be able to buy her own things. Buy her own bottles. The days of needing men for everything are done! *laugh.*

Independence was one of the major definitive features of the model woman in this study. Being able to do things independently of a man was held to be an epitome of a woman. This independence predominantly took the form of economic autonomy, allowing a woman to make

her own decisions that would not ultimately compromise her. In reference to independence as a characteristic of the ideal woman, Thembile argued this point in her statement,

Having your own things. Knowing how to do things for yourself. Uhhh, working, establishing yourself in a sense that, going to school, being more educated, getting what you wanna get in life and not depending on anybody. Knowing how to do things for yourself. Basic things.

She further went on to express her perspective of a woman dependent on her partner,

I see that person as....they don't love themselves. They...I don't know which words to use. But like, a person like that I don't think they will be respected anyway by the other party.

However, she later answered,

Tola: And so you're family, does your family support you?

100%

Several women expressed adamant sentiments of not wanted to emulate the dependency of female relatives from previous generations of whom they felt were disadvantaged because of this reliance. As an example, Simone conveyed similar sentiments in regards to independency as a marker of the ideal woman,

If you can be independent as a woman, you've got it...especially in South Africa. I look at the women in my family and they've always been dependent on their husbands. To the point where it was not good for them. It really worked against them sometimes. I don't want to be like that. Be 40 and not able to do things for myself. Yah, I don't want to be like that.

Simone drew a comparison to the situations of dependency women in her family were experiencing and the consequences of disempowerment that resulted. These witnessed experiences of many of the young women were frequently used as references for upholding the 'independent woman'.

Of great interest was the idea put forth by some of the young women that the independency of a woman and having a man provide financially for her were not necessarily mutually exclusive.

Lindiwe proclaimed,

I mean I want to have my own stuff but I do want him to provide. It's nice to say that we are independent. But it's nice to have someone who can look after you. Not to say that you're needy

*or he's needed but...it's nice *laugh...Maybe it's just because I'm very old school, you know. It's cool to be independent but we also need that support... I think a lot of people confuse being independent with not needing a man. Not that you need a man but it's always nice to have someone to support you, you know?*

Tola: Support you how?

Basically, money.

Lerato affirmed this standpoint in her quote,

Taking lines from Ne-Yo, he said, 'there's something about a woman that's independent that makes you wanna provide for her'

As stated earlier, none of the participants were independent, especially in an economic context. Those who were not entirely supported by their relatives were dependent on their SDs for disposable income and resources of a consumptive nature and/or for financial assistance for basic needs. The social reality of these young women was not reflective of their stance on womanhood and independence. In addition, the acquisition and ownership of material items was dependent on the resources given to them. Ironically, this primary characteristic of independence was reliant on their dependence on their SDs. Thembile who previously stated that a young woman should be able to do things for herself and have ownership of her own things received a monthly stipend from her parents. She also had access to ample resources via her SD in the form of going out for entertainment, eating out, transport, and money for airtime, new clothing and getting her hair done.

The 'independent woman' challenged traditional gender roles while woman as 'the supporter and nurturer' reinforced them. These constructions appear to conflict with one another. Yet, how both of these constructions manifested in the young women's lives reinforced their reliance on their SDs. Independence was related to owning material items and generating a personal income. In relation to this, supporting their partner was considered a responsibility enabling him to better provide. Neither construction presented a space for young women to actualize independency. The two prevailing gender roles of man as 'the provider' and woman as 'the supporter/nurturer' drew heavily upon essentialist and traditionalist views. In addition, the gender roles young

women upheld the most were roles that they felt they were in a position to occupy. These dominant gender constructions were not only compatible with each other, they also were the roles that were adhered to in the young women's SDRs.

6.2 Social Constructionist and Essentialist Views

A social constructionist discourse was put forth in attempts to frame sexuality. This ascription held sexuality as being a socially learnt behaviour and not simply a product of one's biology,

SF1-4: I don't know. Like, you learn in varsity that it's like this 'social constructionist' thing. It's how you're socialized to think and act and it's not necessarily biological, you know. I think there's truth to that.

NSF-2: No, we are definitely taught our sexuality. Like if you think about it, women in Iraq or whatever don't have the same ideas about sexuality and don't act in the same way we do here in South Africa. I definitely don't think it's a biological thing. If anything, it's a bit of both.

These were the sole views where social constructionist ideas of sexuality being shaped by social and cultural structures were interjected. The majority of the young women appealed to essentialist perspectives in their understanding of sexuality. Sex and sexuality were understood to be natural and biological and an ascribed characteristic that was innate and God-given. In direct contrast to a social constructionist approach, female sexuality was deemed to be natural, stemming from one's genetic makeup. In this regard, SF1-1 simply stated,

This is how God made women...it's natural.

In further support,

*SF1-2: We're each, like men and women are each born with certain parts, that are...like sexual parts. God made us that way...I don't know if he really approves of what we do with them *laugh, but yah, it's how we are made and the way we act sexually is just nature. It's a natural thing. You can't really change it. Like, some people have tried but yah, it's very difficult to do. It's going against the...against nature.*

What was established through focus group discussions and further bolstered by in-depth interviews were ideas of women's sexuality being a product of nature. Because it was not a learned behaviour, as a biological trait it could not therefore, be unlearned. Inadvertently,

essentialist approaches to gender implicated the same status to sexuality. Men and women possessed certain 'sexual parts' and how they utilized them was seen as being God-given and natural. This illustrated a strong connect on how young women understood and experienced their sexuality through their gender (Holland et al 1990). The same principle applied to SDRs holds that such innate gender constructions would consider certain gender-specific sexual acts to be natural and therefore, acceptable.

6.3 Utilitarian Views

The instrumental use of female sexuality was also a reoccurring theme. Sexuality was constructed as a tool that could be utilized to one's advantage to gain access to things that otherwise would not be attainable. This approach to sexuality was supported in focus groups

SF2-2 It's just like this. It's a power that we have. I don't know why but, it's like that. If I wear tight clothes that show off, can show men what I have, I can get their attention and stuff. It's weird.

SF2-1 Yeah, men sometimes just don't know, really don't know any better. I mean, how many times have you been walking in the mall or something and some old, nasty guy is with his woman, his wife or kids or whatever, and he's stretching his neck to check out your ass? So I'm saying, if you can use that to work in your favour, then hey, I'm not gonna hate.

Women from the group not engaging in SDR also put forth similar ideas as seen in NSF-2's remark,

*I would love to say that I'm above this but...I'm not! I think every woman at one point or another... they've at some point used their sexuality to make some kind of advance. Be it just skipping a place in the queue...or sleep with your boss for a, for a promotion...I've never done that though! *laugh.*

It was generally understood and agreed upon that young women in particular, were able to utilize their sexuality in an advantageous way benefitting themselves. This was directly in relation to older men as simply stated by Nombeko,

Please...why do you think 'sugar daddy' relationships are so hectic in Braamfontein? These men, they have a need...and there's more than enough girls to supply it.

Sexuality was closely related to the physicality of the female body and the revelation of it. Moreover, within an essentialist construction, male sexuality was understood to intrinsically

respond to this exposure. These young women understood female sexuality to be an instrumental tool that they could use to their advantage (Leclerc-Madlala 2004). Additionally, the ways in which male and female sexuality was enacted was constructed within a context of their gender. The sexual compulsion of SDs and being compelled to seek out lucrative sexual relationships with young women was understood in regards to them being men. The young women never spoke of their sexuality in the same manner. However, utilizing their sexuality in an instrumental fashion was characteristic of a woman. The ways in which men and women were understood to enact their sexuality was appropriated by their gender. Further, this enactment of sexuality within gender-specific, acceptable parameters was substantiated through essentialist discourses of it being natural.

In this chapter, constructs of gender are analyzed as well as how they inform and interconnect with sexuality. Traditionalist and essentialist views of gender and sexuality dominated the young women's constructs. Sexuality was analyzed within a context of gender constructions as it is held that gender informs and mediates sexuality and sexual identities and the ways in which it manifests in SDRs. Furthermore, sexuality was placed within a larger context of gender understanding that each influences the nature of the other (Gagnon & Parker 1995, Selikow 2005). Sexuality extended beyond the physical acts to include the naturalized knowledge and beliefs of sex, including sexual identities informed by social and cultural structures (Holland et al 1990). A CRDA held that these constructs of sexuality were written on the physical bodies; the 'sexual parts' of men and women. On these bodies, the young women imposed gender ideals and sexuality constructs informed by structural influences. The physicality and embodiment of sexuality thus, cannot be separated from the symbolism and social inscriptions informing how sexuality is conceptualized and enacted (Holland et al 1990). Two main constructs of manhood emerged from the young women: man as 'the provider' specifically in the context of resources and the challenging construct of man as 'the equal' in regards to equal division of labour. Constructions of womanhood revealed woman as 'the supporter/nurturer', endowed with the ability to be an emotional support system for her partner and the 'independent woman' characterized by her ownership of material items and her economic autonomy. The vast majority of women appealed to man as 'the provider' and woman as 'the supporter/nurturer', drawing

upon essentialist perspectives to explain the traditional gender role constructs. A central finding pertained to gender constructs not only being strongly informed by social structures but also fortifying the roles that the young women and their SDs enacted within their relationship. Gender roles challenging traditional constructions were recounted but they were not social realities of the young women as the structures informing their understandings contradicted these modern constructs. Young women spoke of the 'independent woman' as a counteraction to the roles of dependency they witnessed of women in their families. So as this construction was upheld, outside of the mass media (eg. the 'Beyonce Syndrome'), women had no reference points within their own social realities. The structural milieu that the young women existed in supported a patriarchal society where woman as 'the supporter/nurturer' dependent on man as 'the provider' was privileged, leaving the 'independent woman' largely unrecognized. Through mass media, women were exposed to ideas of 'the independent woman' but the social structure of their society was not conducive to achieving this status. Man as 'the equal' overall, was not part of their social realities.

Concepts of female sexuality emphasized its utilitarian component as it was an innate part of womanhood that could be used in instrumental ways privileging young women. Again, essentialist discourses dominated, understanding male and female sexuality to be inherent to their genders. However, the ways in which women manipulated their innate sexuality was socially constructed around appropriated utilitarian means. I argue that these constructs did two things: they not only paralleled and informed the roles of young women within their SDRs but also informed the young women's sexual identities and their sexual lives (Holland et al 1990) in the same relationships. Traditionalist gender roles were largely recognized within SDRs as men were, without question, the providers in a financial capacity, naturally in need of sex and attracted to women deemed sexually attractive. Further, women spoke of being support systems for their SDs.

I argue that these constructs of gender informed by structural forces served to do two things: firstly, they facilitated gendered power differentials within sexual encounters in SDR as their social realities reinforced them. Secondly, as later discussed, in regards to the negotiating power

of young women in sexual encounters, the acquisition of resources resulted in women's reduced ability to negotiate sex. Thus, sexual force and coercion was a common outcome as SDs exerted more power in this domain. Thus the material resource itself within SDR produced a situation conducive to women's disempowerment in sex negotiation. All in all, young women drew heavily from their social reality in their construction of gender which had a significant impact on their sexual identities and sexuality and how it manifested in SDRs.

Chapter 7: Beyond the Transaction: Intimacies and Love, Pleasure and Desire

“I do love him but at the same time I can’t eat love. Food has to be on the table”.

- Lerato

Complex commitments of love, desire, pleasure and the security have been reported strongly influenced SDRs (Dunkle et al 2007, Hunter 2002, Leclerc-Madadla 2004). This chapter explores in greater detail the intimacies beyond the transaction, a topic that is almost non-existent in the literature. Here, Kagiso’s story illustrated articulations of intimacies through her expressions of friendship, expectations, competition and potential emotional investment. Other intimacies of the boyfriend/girlfriend context, trust, friendship, and jealousy are also explored. Further, love, pleasure and desire and its invocation through money and power are discussed.

7.1 Kagiso’s Story

It has been established that one of the defining features of SDRs is that they occur within the context of a relationship. Further, narratives of young women revealed genuine feelings and varying degrees of intimacy. Kagiso gave a rich and detailed discourse on her constructions of her SDR. Kagiso was 27, which made her older than most of the university student population and she also had a 2 year old daughter. She readily admitted to being involved with her SD as a means to an end. She had no delusions of this being anything more than a SDR and had no expectations of progressing this relationship in the future. Concerning her situation, she relayed,

What happened is I’m a bit older, you know what I mean. I’m not your typical varsity student. You know they’re all in their early 20s just after they came. Uhm, I went to school, finished my matric and then I chilled for a little bit and as you heard, I’ve got a daughter as well so those things kind of stood in my way for a little bit. They kind of distracted me. And later on I decided to go back.

She shares that the reason for her return to school was to attain a degree so that she wouldn’t find herself in a similar situation again,

Uhm, like you know what? This degree is just something for me to fall back on. You know, like what I really love is to sing. And this was something that kind of hindered me from my studies and for a couple of years I was in and out of music which sort of deterred me. So at that moment

I decided to go back to school so when shit like that happens...excuse my language...happens again at least I know that I have something to fall back on and not just feel sorry for myself, you know what I mean?

Kagiso explains that from the initiation of the relationship there was an honest conversation and an understanding between herself and her SD regarding the reasons she was engaging this relationship,

So basically more than anything about this is that he provides. And the nice thing about this relationship is that he knows that. Seeing that he's going to get married soon anyways. Uhm, he was straight about everything from the get-go. He told me about his life and I told him about my life and he sort of said, 'you know what, I'm willing to sort of like, take care of you for the moment 'cause I like you as a person and I think you deserve a chance in life', you know what I mean? 'So just take it as I'm sort of like your guardian angel', well not to say guardian angel but sort of like a knight in shining armour. You know what I'm saying. So the nice thing about this relationship is that he knows. We're very real with each other. So he knows that it's not about love. We're just two adults that really enjoy each others' company and help each other along the way. Like I help him with his need for excitement I guess, I don't know. And he helps me out financially.

She further clarified her standpoint in this relationship,

I'm real about this situation. I'm not planning to be with this man forever. I'm not even planning to keep him. You know, I'm hoping that one day I can meet someone that I'll actually fall in love with and you know, maybe plan a future uhm, in the long run. You know because I'm not old. I'm just a young adult with a long way to go still. So you know, we'll see where it goes. Maybe we'll remain friends in the future because he's getting married next year anyway. Whether we're still gonna carry on with this I don't know but I think for now it's fine, you know what I mean. I know a lot of girls out there are not real about this situation. They're living in a fantasy land or something.

Kagiso strongly held that this was not a 'love relationship' and that she was engaging in it for specific reasons that did not stem from emotions but from her financial need. She stated that she was not 'living in a fantasy land', being fully aware that her SD had a fiancée he soon intended to marry. She differentiated between her feelings for her partner and those that she would have in a relationship based on love. Overall, it was clear that there were no misconceptions of this relationship being more than an SDR.

However, although Kagiso made it explicitly clear that this relationship emerged out of a need, there were still elements of intimacy within her relationship expressed by her, particularly in the context of friendship.

*[W]e truly enjoy each others' company and I like him a lot. Like he doesn't bore me to the extent where it's like I just want money and then he must be out, you know what I'm saying. We actually go out for dinners and you know, go on getaways and weekends together. And I mean, to spend a whole weekend with someone day in and day out, I mean day and night, you have to at least like the person, you know what I'm saying. So uhm, I do have some feelings for him but I mean, I wouldn't say it's love. Honestly speaking, like I said, I'm hoping that one day I'll find someone like that but right now it's just someone that I really like almost like a very good friend. You know, I'm able to separate between the man that I love and the man that I really like. And he's not bad looking. That helps as well. He's not like, uhm, some big-bellied man! *laugh.*

Again a distinction is made between her current partner and a 'love relationship' by expressing her hopes of entering a relationship with someone she genuinely was in love with. This not only illustrated the disconnect she felt with this man and feelings of love, but it also revealed the temporality of this SDR in Kagiso's mind. But despite this, she expressed that this was an individual that she really liked. Relating him to a 'very good friend', this is an individual that she was able to spend time with and engage on an intimate level of friendship.

Another characteristic of intimacy that appeared to be rooted in Kagiso's relationship was the expectations she had of her partner. In relation to her daughter she states,

And really, he understands that I've got a kid and he always asks about her. Because honestly, besides being about money and stuff, I really wouldn't spend a lot of time with someone that didn't care that I have a child... I look at the situation and I'm like I'm not willing to compromise my daughter for anybody so bye. Maybe because he's also got a child and stuff, I don't know, but he's very nice about the situation... You just need acknowledgement. At least acknowledge that I do have a daughter, you know what I'm saying.

She spoke of needing acknowledgment of her child by her SD and, putting the resources aside, how this was a mandatory qualification. While Kagiso made her emotional standpoint towards her SD very clear, expectations that one would have of a partner in a 'love relationship' were present.

As previously mentioned, Kagiso was very clear that she was involved with a man who had a fiancée. She was not only aware of this situation but she did not have any hopes or aspirations to pursue this relationship beyond the current state. Yet, she recounted situations where feelings of contestation directed to the fiancée were invoked,

When, you know, I call him. Let's say I'm in a fix where I feel like I know it's not the right time to call to sort of like ask anything of him and I find that, you know, no matter what he'll drop anything to come see me. The empowerment in that sense comes from just knowing that, okay this guy has a fiancée that he lives with but he's willing to drop and lie just to come and help me out, you know what I mean. So I start thinking maybe he's starting to fall in love with me, maybe I'm doing my thing right. You know how it is with women. We like comparing ourselves and I'm thinking maybe the fiancée's not doing whatever as well as I am. You know, you start thinking things like that, you know, boosting your own confidence...because a man is there at your every whim and call.

In addition to this, while she recognized that this relationship was not an ideal situation for her, Kagiso further admitted the potential of getting emotionally invested,

So I'm very real. I say things up front and I'm not gonna front about anything. Especially things that can sort of like, damage my way forward. Stand in the way of me moving forward in life. So the minute I sort of like decide to go blind on the situation then I'm gonna hurt myself, you know what I'm saying. So rather just be real. If it works, it works. If it doesn't, it doesn't. And life goes on.

Despite the fact that Kagiso was a young woman who willingly disclosed that she was in this relationship for the financial benefits and that the primary reason that it continued was because of the transaction, there were still very apparent elements of intimacy. Further, there were articulations of expectations of acknowledgement, the entertainment of deeper levels of intimacy and competition and jealousy of her SD's primary partner. Kagiso's narratives of her situation exemplified a SDR where, explicitly, the financial gain is the primary reason of engagement but there is still an enduring and definite context of a relationship.

7.2. Beyond the Transaction

Apart from the attainment of resources, the other young women also spoke of elements within their SD relationships that extended beyond the transaction. This took the form of the

'boyfriend/girlfriend' context, trust and being more than a 'gold-digger', friendship and jealousy/competition towards peers and older women.

7.2.1 'He's My Boyfriend'

The term 'boyfriend' was the main label utilized in reference to the young women's SDs. This terminology was linked to constructs of intimacy and also indicated the constitution of a relationship as their partners were constructed as 'boyfriends' rather than 'sugar daddies' or 'clients' (Hunter 2002). There was explicit reference to the male partners as boyfriends as shown by Lerato,

Tola: Well, before I ask this question, so he's your boyfriend cause you said 'boyfriend', right....

Yes, he's my boyfriend.

This is one, explicit example of representation of the partner as a 'boyfriend'. However, the term was repeatedly used throughout all of the interviews by young women. This construction of a relationship beyond the transaction through terminology was pervasive throughout the study despite the transaction itself being the predominant reason of SDR engagement.

7.2.2 Trust and 'More Than a Gold-Digger'

The term 'gold-digger', in reference to a young woman who was engaging in a relationship with a man solely for access to his resources, had a strong negative connotation associated with it similar to that of 'prostitution', and efforts were made by young women to distance themselves from this term. This was usually done by positioning themselves in their relationships as 'the girlfriend' and their partners as 'the boyfriend'. Moreover, emotional ties were emphasized as a contestation of being a 'gold-digger'.

Lerato drew upon elements of trust in her relationship to deter representations of 'gold-digging'. This relationship, she relayed, was new although she had known him for the past three years and regularly called upon him for resources for food and to take her and her friends out to social events. She drew upon this example to demonstrate the transition of the relationship from then and now,

Certainly, he does worry about [gold-digging]. But now it's not as much as it used to be. And especially because I don't really ask him, he just gives [money] to me. And he'll trust me with things. Because if he really just thought I was there for the money, he wouldn't expose me to things that he is now. Money or...even like with his business transactions. And obviously, if he thought I was in it for the money, he would keep quiet and not tell me what's going on. He won't tell me how much. But you know, like, it's actually elevated because before he was like just a little bit of detail and a little bit of that. Now he is specific about these things. He'll say, 'this is how much this one is, this is how much that one is, and this amount is going there. He tells me exactly what's going on.

Tola: Okay, so there's details now, actual numbers.

Yeah, so there is this element of trust. So he is starting to think that it's not really about the money.

Lerato earlier admitted in Chapter 5 that if her boyfriend no longer had resources available to him for an extended period of time, the relationship would be terminated. However, she drew upon elements of trust and intimacy to negate that she was in it for access to his resources. Again, there is an inclination to construct her SD within the context of a relationship.

7.2.3 'We're Still Friends'

Assertions of friendship were common as seen with Kagiso whose primary characterization of her relationship was in the context of being 'really good friends'. Several young women spoke of being able to communicate with their SD and engage in in-depth conversations with him. He was also characterized as being an advisor. As someone who had acquired more life experience, making him better able to give advice on various issues in their lives. He was an individual who was understood to be a trusted confidant by many young women. Sizani spoke of friendship being a foundation of her SD relationship.

We started off as friends....and we're still friends. I mean like, if things are going on in my life that I can't make sense of or if school gets overwhelming or whatever, I call him. Sometimes he'll come through and just take me out to get my mind off of things and we just, we talk about it, the situation. He's older and more experienced so he usually gives me sound, sound advice. He's a good friend.

Simone spoke of elements of friendship in her relationship particularly through a crisis,

*He spends hours upon hours at the office so sometimes he just wants to talk, like vent about it and things like that. I usually don't understand all of that legal stuff *laugh, but still, I listen. He does the same too. I had a family crisis earlier this year. We found out that my dad was cheating on my mom and wanted to leave her for this other woman. My mom knew for awhile but just didn't tell us, tell me and my sisters. It was so hectic. I didn't even know what to...how to feel. It was crazy. It was really nice because he was there helping me the whole time. Yah, he was a true friend. Just letting me talk about...get it off my chest, you know.*

Again, genuine expressions of friendship were expressed by young women. Both Sizani and Simone spoke of their SDs being individuals that they could talk to about stressful situations and who were support systems for them through difficult times.

7.2.4 'I Get Jealous Sometimes'

Jealousy and competition between the young woman and perceived threats to their SDRs was not unknown. Several participants expressed sentiments of jealousy towards actual or perceived threats to their SDRs from their peers and older women.

Other young women who also were looking to initiate a SDR were understood to be an ultimate threat. This was particularly the case amongst other female students living in residence. As this space facilitated relationship initiations, several participants expressed negative sentiments towards such women and in one case acted aggressively. Phathu recalled her experiences,

It's insane. [residence] was crazy. You know, it gets to the point where if you see a certain car pull up, you know the person and who he's here to see. Like, you know, sometimes I worry that [her SD] will find someone prettier...or some chick who will not demand things or just put up with all types of foolishness, you know. 'Cause when you get here, you see all these really pretty girls and you wonder if he's trying to mack [initiate a relationship with] any of them.

Tola: What if he was?

...I dunno, it would hurt....yah, it would hurt...and I better not know her...even more, she better not know me... 'cause then there would be problems.

Nombeko admitted to acting aggressively towards a peer who lived in her residence.

I knocked on her door. I wanted to, I was going to confront her, you know. 'Cause like, girls talk. That's one thing for sure. They do and they talk a lot. So I was hearing how she was really trying

to talk to him and kind of, I don't know, steal him away from me or share him or something. I don't even know! So yah, I went to her room to confront her. Let me not, I'm not gonna sugarcoat it. I think there was a real possibility of me being violent. I was just young and dumb. I don't even talk to that guy anymore. Who even knows, I don't even know where he is. But I was so mad. I really felt disrespected. And our little secret...she probably could've gotten him if she wanted to!!...so yah, a little jealous too.

Sesi simply stated,

Yah, I get jealous sometimes...that's just the way it is.

Apprehension of being left for an older woman was also expressed. Lerato divulged her fear of this,

Sometimes I think like, you know, obviously he has been exposed to older women, older than me actually. Doesn't he sometimes yearn to be with a woman who's let's say, 5 years my senior. Just for that relativity regarding the...regarding life. That's what I ask myself and that he [might] possibly wanna be with someone else.

Feelings of jealousy evoked possessiveness and competition among young women.

I speculate that jealousy and other negative sentiments were invoked towards peers and older women as they were perceived threats to resource access and financial security. Without negating that these sentiments were legitimate, the resource itself induced such feelings as their attainment was the predominant reason young women engaged in SDRs. Any individual thought to be a danger to this security often provoked feelings of jealousy and contestation.

7.3 Love, Pleasure and Desire

Highly overlooked in the social science literature is the significant role that claims of love, pleasure and desire play in SDRs. As it occurs within a relationship context, it was necessary to look beyond the transaction and money-sex exchange and to explore ideas around these themes. Moreover, how young women understood and interpreted these sentiments was also of great importance. Here, young women engaging in SDRs spoke of their emotional involvement beyond the resources. In addition, the inducement of the emotional attraction by the resource itself was recounted by young women.

Themobile relayed her feelings for her partner, stating that she does love him,

*I don't want to say the world because I'd be lying *laugh.....I wanna say the world but not really the world. He means everything to me. He's my friend, my partner, he's my...I'm becoming emotional! *laugh...This person makes me feel happy. Not always. At times *laugh. And I feel comfortable around the person. He's my friend. And I love him.*

Zinhle, also spoke of her feelings and speculated about their future,

Well, okay, obviously I love him. I just can't be with someone I don't love. If you don't love someone what else is there at the end of the day, you know? And again, the kind of person he is. He's a really gentle person. Someone I think I can live with if I wanna....I mean, you have to think, 'Am I going to be able to live with this person when I'm in an argument?' How's he gonna handle it and stuff like that. I think someone I can live with in the same space. And I think, I know, he'll be a good father. When you live with someone you find out they have this habit that you didn't know about. Especially guys, they make the whole place untidy and you have to know at what level he is at. Or are they willing to change. And if he's not willing to change are you going to be able to handle it.

Both women proclaimed to love their partners and expressed the integral role they played in their lives, both present and future, although resources were the predominating reason these relationships were engaged. They constructed their SDRs as 'boyfriends' in a relationship riddled with sentiments of intimacy. As both women stated earlier that they would terminate the relationship once resources were no longer accessible, claims of love were overridden by the 'no money, no sex' rule (Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001).

7.3.1. Money, Power and Sexual Desire

Discourses from the young women also suggested that money and power and sexual attraction were not mutually exclusive. Several women stated that it was displays of money and power that led to their sexual attraction to their current partners. Young women appeared to be socialized to find markers of money, power, social status and other resources attractive and not necessarily the individual himself who possessed ownership. While young women appeared to be genuinely sexually attracted to their older and greater-resourced male counterparts, this however, was highly dependent on their social markers of resources and power. Though, the sexual desire was genuine, this assists in explaining the termination of relationships once resources dissipated. Lindiwe described what she found attractive about her partner,

And I think for a lot of people the money is the attraction. We often think that it's just emotional and so forth but a lot of it is power and money. Like my boyfriend...I mean, it wasn't the only main factor....but it definitely was an added bonus. Lol. A man who can take care of you and so forth, it's attractive. It's definitely an attractive aspect.

She also said,

So it's funny, 'cause he's real confident and I don't know...and the power is really attractive.

Lindiwe also recounted a past experience where money was directly linked to sexual attraction,

Okay, let me tell you about an experience I had. Uhm, there's a family friend who's very, very, very wealthy. I mean, he came to Joburg and we met up. It was very innocent, you know. So then he invited me to Cape Town. He flew me to Cape Town, took me on a shopping spree and you know, all these things. And that was my first experience of a 'sugar daddy' relationship. Nothing happened, you know but like, that was my first experience. And from that, I think I was very, very tempted to do, you know. Omg, I was very, very, tempted!

In this narrative, Lindiwe communicated the difference between strictly 'emotional' attraction and those interlinking money, power and sexual desire in SDRs. Lindiwe's experience also reinforces the essentialist notions of man as 'the provider' that she herself, earlier supported. The fact that this family friend was able to fly her to Cape Town and take her on a shopping spree constituted him as a 'full man' because he was able to completely fulfill the ideal gender role of man as 'the provider'. This induced a sexual desire for him. She acknowledged that the power that the man possessed implicitly through being greater-resourced evoked desire for this individual and increased his sexual attractiveness. While genuine feelings of desire are undoubtedly present, the intricacies of this sentiment with the resources and power exerted by the SD become quite evident.

Throughout the narratives of their relationships, elements of love, pleasure and desire were emphasized by young women further entrenching their unions as being relationships. This was also exemplified with the terminology utilized in reference to their partners. The label of 'boyfriend' was perpetually used as a signifier of a relationship. Without question, much of the intimate elements of the SDR were genuine and sincere. As it was stated, being able to spend a substantial amount of time with someone that you have no feelings for, be it even within a

platonic relationship, would be extremely difficult. However, though these sentiments were authentic, it was acknowledged that the transactional component of the relationship was the predominating reason it was being engaged and often the reason claims of love and desire were evoked. Even in confessions of love, young women readily admitted that they would 'have to' end the relationship if resources were no longer retrievable.

A main finding of this study was exposed through the enriched narrative of Kagiso, exploring the underdocumented moments of intimacy beyond the transaction in SDRs. While Kagiso and her SD had a mutual understanding that the attainment of resources was her predominant reason of SDR engagement, Kagiso's story reveals sentiments of friendship, expectations, jealousy and potential emotional investment. The other young women also spoke of intimacy within their SD relationships that extended beyond the transaction. This took the form of the 'boyfriend/girlfriend' construction, trust and being more than a 'gold-digger', friendship and jealousy/competition towards peers and older women. The terminology of 'boyfriend', 'friend' and 'provider' were part of the everyday language used by young women in reference to their SDs. Further, labels such as 'gold-digger' were negated through young women constructing themselves as 'girlfriends' in their SDRs. A CRDA understands language to construct and reconstruct sexuality (Selikow 2004). These terms assisted in young women constructing their SDRs within the context of a 'boyfriend/girlfriend' relationship. Through this construct, elements of intimacy such as trust, friendship, love and desire were constituted. Although the transaction was central to SDRs as it was the predominant reason young women engaged them, the relationship construct was vital, in part, to disengage associations with prostitution. This is why terms such as 'client' were not used to characterize SDs. The everyday language of the young women in understanding their SDRs as a boyfriend/girlfriend relationship instead of a sex worker/client relationship socially and symbolically appropriated the transaction, constructing the young women's sexuality in a context now mediated by intricacies of intimacy.

Expressions of love, pleasure and desire were also given particularly in the context of their evocation by material resources and power. Revealed through a CRDA, another central finding of this study was the centrality of material resources to this sexual attraction, desire and pleasure.

The feelings of desire the young woman conveyed were constructed around social markers of material possessions which they understood to be representative of power. Thus, the material initiated an emotive response. Because access to resources was the predominant reason of engaging SDRs, once the flow of resources ceased, feelings of desire, love, pleasure dissipated as well. As Silberschmidt & Rasch (2001) relay, claims of love were made in regard to SDs but this sentiment was spoken of in relation to the 'resource attraction' and quickly dissolved once the SDR ended. Yet, because the predominating transaction occurs within a relationship construction, expressions of intimacies and love, pleasure and desire are an integral component to SDR even in lieu of many expressions being induced by the transaction itself.

Chapter 8: Complexities of Power

“You know, I have to take the bad things with the good so...”

-Kagiso

More recent studies acknowledge the domains in which power is being exerted and inhibited within transactional sex relationships and the complexities that this entails (Parker 2009). This chapter seeks to add to the literature by investigating the complexities and complications of the power dynamics within SDR. This is done through addressing the false dichotomy of the ‘victim/vixen’. In addition, SDR initiation was a space young women exerted power while negotiating power within sex encounters was restrained were explored. Power as resistance through tactics utilized as a way of contesting positions of disempowerment, was also analyzed.

8.1 ‘Victim’ or ‘Vixen’?

Transactional sex relationships have historically portrayed young women as being impoverished victims, ultimately disempowered by the sexual exploitation of the older men they engage with (Leclerc-Madlala 2004, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). Similar perceptions were also prevalent as seen through both non-SD and SD focus groups when discussing ideas of power and SDR.

This ideal portrayal of young women in SD relationships characterized them as being passive victims subject to the sexual mistreatment of older men and the inability to say no to the high life. A member of the non-SD focus group stated,

NSF-1: How many students would refuse more money than they’ll probably see for the rest of that year? These men are nasty. They should just know better and do better.

Young in SD focus groups agreed,

*SF2-2: There are so many power dynamics involved. Some young girl who’s in the big city for the first time gets approached by a man in a nice BM, or Audi or whatever. This man offers to take her out to places she’s only really heard of. Like, can we just be serious. What is she gonna do? *laugh.*

SF1-4: These girls are victims. They are being sexually exploited and they don't even know it. It's just for your body, that's all he's there for. They think they're winning. They're really not.

Here, the 'big city lights' effect was a factor characterizing young female students as being naïve and inexperienced. There was little dispute that there was a mutual agreement to the involvement of this relationship. However, a younger woman approached by an older man with greater financial capital would have extreme difficulty refusing money if offered, making them vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Interestingly, the consent of young women did not come into question but it was a shared sentiment that certain offers would be extremely difficult to refuse and thus, did not consider their choice to be a valid one. The onus was placed on the man to ultimately make the choice not to exploit young women as he was the empowered individual deemed to 'know better'.

Conversely, the 'vixen' argument was put forward, understanding these same young women as ultimately empowering themselves through SD relationships by exploiting power dynamics of age and economic disparity and tapping into resources that otherwise eluded them (Leclerc-Madlala 2004). This depiction of young women who actively engaged such relationships and utilized their sexuality to their advantage was also illustrated by SD focus group members,

SF2-1: I think it's powerful. My mother was a domestic worker so, yah, she couldn't give me a full proper lifestyle. I'm half her age and I've already done so many things.

SF2-2: Yah, our mothers and grandmothers lived lives under apartheid. They couldn't do so many things. But South Africa has changed and now I can do all of those things that they couldn't. How is that a bad thing? How is that disempowering?

Being able to attain material capital and a higher social status and lifestyle than female relatives from previous generations was understood to be a form of empowerment by these women in SDR. Further, with the end of apartheid and the advent of a changing socio-economic milieu allowing this to be a possibility was also seen as empowering.

The two idealized portrayals of young women in SDRs as being 'victims' and 'vixens' predominated discussions of power within focus groups. Within this particular kind of

relationship, the complexities of power were briefly raised. In regards to ultimate empowerment or disempowerment, NSF-2 responded,

NSF-2: I don't know...I think it's a little bit of both. I mean, like, if he gives me things because I'm having sex with him, okay fine. But what if I get things and say I don't want to have sex. Or the type of sex he wants? Or unprotected sex?! What then? That's not a good look. I just don't, I really can't see how, just how a young university student can have full control over that situation.

NSF-3: Yah, it's crazy. I agree though. You can't be fully in control of that. You're bound to feel like you're not in control. No matter what he's given you.

In this discussion, power (or lack thereof) was expressed linking sex and on one 'keeping up their end of the bargain'. Here, complexities of empowerment were touched upon, raising key queries revealing contentions of power and how it is continuously exerted and inhibited with SD relationships.

8.2 Empowerment in Initiation

In the domain of initiation, young women frequently exerted power (Luke 2003). They tended to decide if the relationship began and when it ended. As stated earlier, this was a domain where young women and their friends were active social agents in finding and instigating SDRs. However, this exercising of choice occurred within structures previously summarized. Taking into account the structural forces that young women were being informed by, they exerted agency in choosing to engage in SDRs as a means of navigating these structures leading them to actively seek out these relationships.

Lindiwe recounted a process of initiation that she is familiar with,

Like uhm, yah, I've seen it before. I see it. Even people I know, like when we go out, they specifically go out, like you know that club Moloko, to meet men who have money. So they'll go there scanning the tables to see who is buying bottles and try to meet them and pursue a relationship clearly because they can afford to take them out and all that stuff.

Young women actively went to spaces where potential SDs were in abundance and ‘scanned’ and ‘pursued’ men that they deemed to be possibilities of SDRs. While women dominated in relationship initiation, this was not the case in regards to relationship maintenance.

8.3 Maintenance and Power of Resistance

In the domain of relationship maintenance, young women spoke of their SDs exerting power over when they met up, whether or not sex occurred and if it was protected, leaving them with reduced control over negotiating this space. However, ‘disappearing’ was a way in which power was used as a means of resistance were also actualized (Foucault 1979) and will be discussed shortly.

Relationship maintenance pertained to activities and rendezvous where young women met up with their SDs. During these meetings, sex and/or resources were usually transacted. Some young women spoke of instances where relationship maintenance was deemed to be disempowering. Sizani and Nombeko, long-time friends from their first year at Wits, recall experiences when they felt their control over the situation was restrained,

Before I had a car, we worked on his schedule. So if a week past without him coming then, yah, that’s the way it was. Or if he felt like coming everyday, then I had to see him everyday. ‘Cause this guy, ne...he was the type to, he was very demanding. So he got mad if you didn’t come out [of residence]. And I knew what he expected when he came...

Tola: What was that?

Sex. Yah, he wanted sex....yah, I was naïve back then and I let him have all the power to decide certain things.

Nombeko added,

Yah, I think we all have a story like that. They can be very demanding. Especially when you’re young and you really don’t know any better, you know...

Through their past experiences, the two friends, Nombeko and Sizani illustrated how they lacked control over when they would meet with their SDRs. Sizani, relating it to a lack of personal transport, felt that he had full control as to whether he met up with her. Further, this led to disempowerment within sex as they both understood that this was expected of them upon each

meeting irrespective of whether it was desired or not. Both women felt forced to not only get together with their SDs but to have sex with them at their will as their SDs exerting more control over relationship maintenance.

Both now in their mid-twenties pursuing masters degrees and in possession of their own transport, the past situations Nombeko and Sizani would not be a reality now. However, despite being 'naïve', the two friends developed a tactic to challenge disempowerment in regards to relationship maintenance.

8.3.1 'Disappearing'

This act of 'disappearing' was a tool used to regain some control in their restrained ability to negotiate sex, becoming a power of resistance (Foucault 1979). The tactic of 'disappearing' was utilized by several young women in describing a method of securing resources from their SD in a setting where sexual force could not be administered and then proceeding to make themselves unavailable for contact until they again desired to acquire more resources. Lerato recalls initially using this tactic with her SD,

He was like uhm, older and uhm, a part of me was like 'he's gonna take advantage'. So every time it would be when he'd call, like we'd have intervals. I'd speak to him this week. And speaking to him means him coming and bringing my friends and I food, taking us out and then I'd 'disappear', you know. So that he doesn't go and ask for more, for sex and whatever, you know.

In Lerato's case, her SD eventually responded in a certain way,

But then he gave me an ultimatum. So he was outright about it. 'You are with me because of the money' ... and then I noticed he was a very nice guy...a very nice guy.

Nombeko also recounted using this tactic,

*Sizani and I used to always 'disappear', like all the time. Yah, if she wanted to go out or if we were bored or something, I'd call the 'sugar daddy' up and be like, 'come through'. He'd come with food or whatever or take us out and then I'd be like, 'yah, thanks hey...I'll call you'. *laugh. You can only do that to the dumb ones though.*

Sesi said,

Yo!, 'disappearing' is something that every girl in these situations knows about. You bring a friend or something, he'll take you all out, and then you say 'bye'. You keep quiet until you're ready to see him again. And then you do it again. If you can though. It could be dangerous if you're not careful.

Through ‘disappearing’, young women often reaped the rewards of SDRs without keeping up their end of their bargain by engaging in sex. While this power of resistance was exerted, they were aware of the circumstances in which they could do so with ‘the dumb ones’ and the associated dangers. Because the young women lived in on-campus residence, SDs frequently knew where and how to find them. In Lerato’s case, her SD gave her an ultimatum of which she chose to cease ‘disappearing’ and progress the relationship. Another example of the dangers was rape which was recounted by one woman in this study and will be discussed later on. All of these factors enabled young women to exert resistance to power under specific conditions. It was not a tactic to be used on a permanent basis due to these factors. However, in a domain where young women expressed feeling disempowered, ‘disappearing’ provided a space where they felt they could secure some form of control of this situation.

At this juncture, after exerted power over relationship initiation, many young women later occupied a space where they felt they could not control the terms of the relationship. Despite having more control over ending their SDRs, this was rarely done so unless resources ceased to be given or was not attained in the desired quantities. It appears that young women opted for employing tactics of resistance instead of exercising the power to end the relationship as a response to lacking negotiating power in the domain of relationship maintenance.

8.4 Independency Within Dependence

Several of the young women conveyed ways in which dependency led to their disempowerment in various domains of their SDR such as being fully reliant and dependent on their SDs for financial support. However, as a form of resistance, many young women implements tactics to navigate this sense of dependency, creating for themselves a domain of empowerment.

‘I Can’t Do Anything For Myself Right Now’

Young women spoke of being in a disempowering space during times when they felt that they were completely reliant on their SDs for financial assistance particularly for basic needs. The speculation of whether he felt in control and able to exert power over them because of this was articulated. The dependency that resulted from this was also a concern. Kagiso shared her feelings of disempowerment and dependency in situations when she was completely reliant on her SD for financial support,

When I feel disempowered is when I do realize that okay uhm, I can’t do anything for myself right now. Not that I couldn’t do anything but I’m just saying that at that moment, you know, when I need sort of like financial help from him, you know what I mean. Really, something like, okay, I cannot provide something for my daughter, maybe school fees or whatever at the time or there’s no food in the house and I also don’t have a plan and I feel like, you know, that’s the only place I can turn, you know what I mean. It’s like you need this man more than you thought you did. There’s realizations when you feel uhm, very needy. There’s times when you’re in need to the point where even if you don’t want to but that’s the only plan that you have. That’s when he comes into play. Then you wonder does he think like ‘she’s nothing without me’ or whatever. Sometimes you won’t even have money for your basic cosmetics and toiletries and you have to ask a man for money to buy pads or whatever. Those are things that make you feel very disempowered. I think about the situation and you feel very disempowered as a woman.

She then recalls a time when she was financially independent,

And when I used to be a professional singer before I had my daughter, there was always money, you know, when I had no dependants whatsoever. I used to be so independent, make money, you know, everything came to me. I would just live the life. And then all of that just got taken away somehow. Then you find yourself in situations like these, you know, like this one. So it’s very disempowering.

Sizani recalls similar feelings of disempowerment,

I remember a like awhile back, like I had no money. Nothing. I was studying and my mother couldn’t send me anything. I had to ask him and like, it was so...my heart sank. I hated it. I’m a proud person so to go to this man and have to ask him for money, yah, it was really low for me. I felt completely like he had all the power.

Circumstances when Kagiso and Sizani felt that they had created a dependency on their SDs were remembered as periods of disempowerment. Sizani expressed having to ask her SD for resources led to her feeling as if she were powerless.

Lerato felt that the empowerment of SDs could lead to abuse if they were aware of it and were so inclined,

Especially if you have nothing to stand on and if you're just...he knows that he's your main provider. He can do as he pleases. He can tell you, 'you are nothing without me', you know. And maybe emotionally and in many cases physical, he's the one who is in control.

However, Lerato and other young women offered extensive ideas on finding independence within dependency. These tactics were often used as a means of negotiating power within their relationship as to ensure that they retained some semblance of power in situations where their ability to exert it was severely limited.

Negotiating power and the ability to make decisions within the relationship directly and indirectly stemmed from access to money. As most of the young women were not generating their own income, they were dependent on SDs for consumption. Lerato elaborates,

That's my thing. I don't want to be too dependent...like as much as he does, I don't really ask him that much, you know. He's the only that will be like, 'here' [gives her money], you know. But I think if I show that I'm too dependent, that's when he'll have control over me...like now, we're just dating. I don't know how long this is gonna be for...but at the same time, like, I make sure that I can take care of myself, you know. And to a certain extent, that sort of gives him, like you know sort of makes him think, 'well, she's not that dependent so she can leave anytime'. And I want him to think that way, you know. So he mustn't think that I'm solely and entirely dependent on him.

She added,

I mean, I would hate to have to ask for everything. I mean, pads and things, you know. We as women, we need to be able to do things on our own. Provide for ourselves. If I want to go have coffee, I don't have to go to him to have coffee with my friends.

Here, Lerato expressed the need for women to be independent and have the ability to 'do things on our own'. This was placed in the context of being able to socialize with friends when one desired. The contradictions in this statement reveal that Lerato herself, along with all of the other young women, was not in a position to claim financial independence particularly for purposes of consumption. However, to combat the possibility of being in positions of dependency and disempowerment, several young women spoke of ways in which spaces for independence could be created within dependence.

‘A lot of Fish In The Sea’

Kagiso:

I'm sorry. I think that there is a lot of fish in the sea. They're not all the same size and they don't come in the same shape but I think I would get the same things from a lot of other men, you know what I'm saying. There's always a 'sugar daddy' or two out there always willing to, you know, to be at your service. It comes with a price, but there's always somebody with a flashy car just waiting for you. Because he's also getting some need fulfilled by you so it's not just a give and take.

Kagiso stressed the importance of options. Because there were a large number of ‘fish’, SDs were never in short supply thus, if one was mistreating a young women and exploiting her dependence on him, she could easily engage a new relationship, even if it came at a price.

‘Don't Give Him the Idea That I Really Need Him’

Lerato:

Uhm, despite the whole, uhm, 'older guy' thing, Nigerians see South African women as gold diggers. They're all about money, you know. So for him, he's sort of confused about this whole thing because I don't give him the idea that I really need him. But when the need arises, I will ask him and he does come through.

Projecting an image of not ‘needing’ one’s SD was a tactic used to prevent exploitation due to dependency. Young women spoke of creating a perception that they did not need their SDs and the resources that they provided. Again, representations of a ‘gold-digger’ were being contested through this approach. Yet, when Lerato was in actual ‘need’ of resources from her SD, he provided.

‘Save Something For A Rainy Day’

Lerato:

That goes back to my point...you know how women get disempowered if the man is the provider in the relationship and I think it comes with....if you have something to back you up, there is no way he can let's say rule you with an iron fist. You need to have something to stand on. That's why I've learnt, within a sugar daddy relationship, you need to have a backbone... 'cause then if you have a sugar daddy, sugar daddies can be very abusive.

Like, basically,...he'll provide for you but make sure you have something to prop you up. So if he's like 'here, R15,000, go shopping just because I'm going to a conference'. And even if you don't want to, you're living off him. So if you had something, you know, to keep you up and fine, you got the money but be strategic about it! If he gives you R10000, save R5000 and go shopping with the other R5000.

Tola: So you're saying save something for a rainy day.

Yes, cause you never know.

Putting a portion of acquired resources aside in the advent that access to them was no longer available was a method used to actualize some semblance of independency. Several young women spoke of not exhausting all of the resources attained giving them leverage to resist exploitation by SDs as they were not entirely dependent on them.

Discourses outlining ways in which the women created independence in their situations with their SDs, whether actualized or not, were given as a means of generating some form of empowerment. This helped to maintain a control over whether their SDs took advantage of their dependency on them. Of interest, the women more focused on maintaining a pretense of dependency and were not as concerned with making it a reality by actually securing it. Nevertheless, these tactics were employed as a power of resistance against exertion of control by their SDs.

8.5 Sexual Encounters and Negotiating Power

Sexual relations were the domain where complexities of power were exemplified. There were areas where young women were sexually disempowered and where they tended to have more negotiating power (Choi & Holroyd 2007, Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001, Wagman et al 2009, Wojcicki & Malala 2001, Wood et al 1998, Wood & Jewkes 1997). It is here where numerous dynamics of power were being negotiated. Ultimately, this led to many of the young women being in a position where they lacked bargaining power. However, there were accounts where young women recounted having more control over the situation.

8.5.1 'You Must Take the Good With the Bad'

A substantiated number of young women expressed feeling obligated to have sex with their SDs on at least one occasion throughout the duration of their involvement. The primary reason for this feeling of obligation originated from the ideas of them having to 'keep up' their end of the transaction. This was particularly the case after resources had been received. Lindiwe was very aware of this power dynamic,

Oh, it's such an issue. It's a power thing. Because if I've given you money and I've held up my end of the bargain, so I've already given you the money so I can say, Tola, I want your earrings, I want your ring and whatever else I want. You see how men are empowered and women are not, you know.

Thembile supported this,

Hmm mm. they're actually using [you]...nowadays, guys, they know that most girls are out for the materialistic things. So obviously in order to get what they want sexually, then obviously they know if I buy this certain person abcdefg then tomorrow I know I will get this cause she'll be dependent on me. She won't be able to say no because I do everything for her. So that person is obliged to partake in whatever it is the other party wants them to.

Kagiso admitted briefly to sex occasionally being an obligation,

Tola: Do you ever feel that's an obligation?

To have sex with him?

Tola: Yeah, to have sex with him.

Uh, sometimes, yeah. Because sometimes.... you get like those, you know times where it's like you can see that it's expected of you.

In regards to negotiating and enforcing safe sex practices, all young women spoke of situations where they felt that they were unable to do so with their SDs, Zinhle recounted her experience,

Okay, I've been in that situation before. I was like, no let's use a condom and the guy said no. okay, it was my boyfriend. He was like 'no, I won't come inside of you'. And then he does! Now you're panicking, you have to get the morning after pill and stuff like that. And you're wondering why does he do that? He's so selfish. And you feel stupid as well. Like you're letting yourself be in those kind of situations.

Sesi, almost indifferently, told of her experience of rape by the hands of her SD,

You know, speaking of which. I was in second, my second year. I used to date this one guy who just gave me things and the like. Yah, one time he was over and made advances but I was like, saying 'no' to him. At first it was like all fun, like just play fighting and whatever but then it got serious. I kept trying to make him stop but he wouldn't. And like, yah, he forced himself on me. Yah, that's what happened

Sesi also added,

He made some references to like how he gave me things and why am I being so difficult...at that point, I wasn't even listening to him.

Through these examples, it is evident that in the context of a SDR women were severely restrained in the domain of the power to negotiate sex. From feeling obligated to engage in sexual activity to being forced to do so, the experience of several of the young women attested to this being an area where they often were not able to exert power due to the transactional nature of SDRs. Sesi's SD and rapist referred to her obligation to have sex with him because he had given her resources. In addition to this case of sexual violence, many women found themselves in situations where sexual coercion occurred. Because they had accepted resources from their SDs, there was a feeling of obligation to have sex. This accounts of sexual coercion and force exemplifies gender-based violence by the hands of an intimate partner (Dunkle et al 2007, Jewkes et al 2003, Wong et al 2008, Wood et al 2007). Once resources were accepted, their bargaining power was compromised, making young women vulnerable to sexual violence at the hand of their SDs who dictated when sex occurred and whether it was protected.

Challenging the extensive discourse of complete disempowerment in sexual encounters, Nombeko, Sizani and Lerato alike spoke of exercising their power to negotiate and enforce safe sex practices with their SDs (MacPhail & Campbell 2001, Wood et al 2007). While this agency was present, it by no means, was always exercised. The young women were aware that they 'should practice safe sex' but were not always 'successful'. These young women frequently chose to *not* practice safe sex every time.

8.5.2 'Sometimes It Has to Be About What He Wants'

Some women expressed self-pressure around having sex with their SDs. While claims were made that sex was not being directly forced on them, they occasionally felt obligated to engage in it. Nombeko recalls,

Mmm. Yah, I've been in a situation where I could see things were advancing and like, I just didn't say anything. Like, I didn't really feel like it but...I guess it was just a situation where we had just gone out to dinner or whatever or he took me shopping and like, well, I have to what I have to do, you know.

Sizani also expressed similar feelings of self-pressure,

It's...it's like. You know, no one is telling you to do anything but you can see that he wants it. And like, how can you say 'no' when he's just made time to see you, taken you out, wined and dined you and whatever, you know. I've just had a great time at his expense so sometimes it has to be about what he wants.

In terms of power relations within sexual relationships, self-pressure was put forth as a feeling of obligation to engage in sex to keep up their end of the bargain. While neither physical nor verbal coercion was applied, Nombeko and Sizani spoke of times where there were still feelings of pressure to have sex with their SDs. However, this sense of self-pressure was influenced by the inherent power differentials of their sexual encounters (Wood et al 1998). The two women felt they had to have sex because their SDs had recently given them their resources and time. A further complexity arises as sexual relations in exchange for access to resources was the predominating reason SDRs were initiated. This facilitated restraints on young women's ability to negotiate safe sex. This contributed to Nombeko and Sizani feeling that they could not say no.

Here, the typical 'victim'/'vixen' dualism was confronted, revealing the intricacies of the structure/agency debate. Typically, the portrayal of young women was that of being ultimately empowered, utilizing their sexuality for material gain ('vixen') or as subjects of sexual exploitation by older men, being ultimately disempowered (victim). Attuned to Archer's (2003) approach to structure and agency, a CRDA refutes this approach, upholding that neither structure nor agency ultimately is in control as they each continuously mediate the other. Power is then inhibited and exerted on varying levels and in different domains. With particular regards to

sexuality, this Foucauldian approach to power holds sexuality as a particular space where this transfer of power occurs (1979). Using this framework, young women in SDRs were not ultimately empowered or disempowered. Instead, the findings in this study supported the aforementioned approach that power was exerted in certain respects but was also constrained in others. The process of initiation was frequently controlled by the women who were active social agents in finding and initiating an SDR. However, relationship maintenance where the transaction of resources and sex occurred was a domain that the SDs controlled. In this domain, women expressed having to meet up with their SDs at his discretion. In regards to negotiating power within sexual encounters, the disparity was apparent as the SD decided when and what type of sex occurred during these meetings. Upon the acceptance of resources given by the SDs, as this was the leading reason of SDR engagement, SDs expected and felt entitled to sexual relations on their terms. Furthermore, young women also felt an obligation to have sex due to the acceptance of resources. Thus, this disparity in negotiating power was largely contingent on the resource. A CRDA allowed for the examination of power differentials within sexual relationships and the resulting sexual practices in SDRs. It further elucidated that the material gain of the young women infringed on their ability to exert power in negotiating when and how sex transpired in their SDRs. Because the existence of SDRs was reliant on the young women's material gain, the very nature of SDRs facilitated disempowerment in the domain of sex negotiation. The resources itself mediated the power dynamics of negotiating sex in SDRs.

An integral component of power relations is resistance to power (Foucault 1979). Despite power constraints in their ability to exercise choice in negotiating sex, in situations where their choices were limited to a certain number of actions, young women did exercise 'micro decision-making' (Wojcicki & Malala 2001). This allowed for a power of resistance (Foucault 1979) where women navigated structures through creative ways within the limitations that were placed on them. In avoidance of reduced negotiating power in sex encounters, many women spoke of implementing a tactic of 'disappearing' where they would accumulate as much resources as possible from SDs and then make themselves unavailable, avoiding sex as their fulfillment of the 'bargain'. A power of resistance was also exercised as a way of maintaining a degree of independence in a situation of dependency. This exemplified Foucault's claims of power never

being total. Power not only manifested itself in domination but in resistance to domination (1979). Under circumstances where women were financially dependent, additional tactics were employed by saving a portion of money obtained as leverage and to ensure their SDs were aware that they had alternative choices in regards to securing resources through another SD. This was done through making him aware that there are 'other fish in the sea', 'not giving him the idea that I really need him' and 'saving something for a rainy day'.

Again, a CRDA emphasized the complexities of power relations insofar that young women's negotiating power within sex encounters in SDRs overall, was limited stemming from their acquisition of resources. Yet, it cannot be ignored that women tended to have more control in relationship initiation. The following situation is created: young women actively entered into SDRs, using their sexuality as a commodity but were then unable to control the terms under which they had sex once resources, the primary reason for SDR engagement, were obtained. Moreover, women also had more control over the termination of SDRs and yet, they did not exert this power unless they no longer had access to resources in spite of constrained bargaining power within sexual encounters. The unquestionable implications for HIV infection risk will be discussed in Chapter 10.

Chapter 9: The Social Meanings of Money

“Every gift comes with a price”

- Sesi

Revealed in the in-depth interviews were the extensive links between money, gifts and favours and sexual intimacies. Money was not simply a tool used to purchase items. It was also loaded with social meaning (Zelizer 2007). How money was appropriated in SDRs and the different meanings of money in different relationships exemplified the strong symbolism associated with this resource. Also, the ways in which money was transacted between the young women and their SDs and the material form that took it were strong signifiers of various aspects of the relationship.

9.1 Social Meanings of Money

Within SDRs, money was laden with meaning. Interestingly, money was said to not be the main kind of resource given within SDRs although the gifts received were a result of money. As discussed earlier, young women expressed the preference of gifts, favours and services using this as a distinguishing feature from ‘prostitution’. The direct exchange of money was sometimes perceived as a lack of interest in the young women by their SDs and a diminishment of their value. Sesi relayed,

*I hate when he just gives me money! You know why? Because I know what that means. It means that he’s very busy. Like too busy to spend time with me and go out and have dinner and things like that. So yah, when he says ‘here’s something to hold you over’ and gives me cash, I get upset, you know *laugh.*

Simone directly related the amount spent on her with the affection that her SD had for her,

*Let me be...well let me be just me *laugh. If a man asks you out, you know, and then he takes you to McDonald’s or Nando’s or whatever...he doesn’t like you. *laugh. He must show that he does. Take the time and effort to take you somewhere nice. Show that he put thought into it, you know. I know that’s not right but that’s the way I grew up. My dad in particular, he expressed his love with buying me things ‘cause he was never there...so that’s just what I’m used to.*

Sesi and Simone made connections with monetary exchanges in relation to levels of intimacy. Sesi specified that she knew what it 'meant' when her SD simply gave her money. Here, social meanings were written on this form of the resource being given to her. Moreover, she understood these meanings to be negative, implying a disinterest and the prioritizing of other things over her. Simone acknowledged the fact that she directly associated feelings of love and caring with the amount of money spent and the way in which it was spent. While the transaction was the predominant reason for the young women engaging SDRs, what becomes clear was that not only was receiving resources expected but the manner and form that it was given was also expected to occur within certain ways. Here, money was imbued with social meaning that young women characterized as being distant, cold and unthoughtful.

9.2 Appropriateness of Types of Gifts and Resources

The kinds of gifts and resources given were appropriated by the young women in relation to the stage they felt their SDRs had reached. The type of resources spent was expected to change over time as the relationship evolved. Sesi explained,

*In the beginning this 'sugar daddy' would come and give me like, money to get my hair done or whatever, buy me stuff from Mr. Price *laugh. But yah, we just went to Cape Town the other day and he bought me a Gucci bag, yah. I mean, you just can't, like he can't be giving you the same things forever. Things change and people grow, you know. The relationship changes. I'm not that girl that you met in the beginning. We know each other now so I definitely expect more from him now than I did before.*

At 25, Sesi was older than most of the young women in this study and had more experience in the power of negotiation. She described the progression of her SD relationship in regards to the types of gifts and resources being given.

One apprehension that was expressed was the foreseen sexual obligation that would follow a large gift or amount of money. Kagiso shared that this was sometimes the case in her SDR,

Sometimes, especially if I want something big from him. Something grand like a lot of money for something important like my fees or....where I know the amount that I'm asking for is sort of like asking too much but I'll ask for it anyway because I need it. Then you get like those, you know times where it's [sex] like you can see that it's expected of you.

Kagiso illustrated that gifts or favours that exceeded the norm often came at an equated price. In extenuating circumstances where she was given a large amount, it was understood that sex was expected of her.

9.3 Different Monies for Different Relationships

As Nombeko also had a ‘for real, for real’ boyfriend, she stated the different expectations she had for the financial obligations of her SD and her boyfriend.

My boyfriend is broke. He’s a student like me so like, I don’t expect him to be giving me too much. I wouldn’t even let him because I know his situation, you know. Yah, so if he buys me food or we go to a movie or whatever, I’m happy. I don’t complain.

Tola: But your ‘sugar daddy’ is different?

*Of course. *laugh. We know that I’m with him for that reason...and besides, plus he can give me these things, you know. So I can’t settle for the same things, what my boyfriend gives me is because I know he can do more....you know what, Tola. I would even say that I appreciate what my boyfriend does for me financially even more than the ‘sugar daddy’. Yah, because I know he doesn’t have much and he still sacrifices because he loves me. Like, if you have R10,000 and you give away R500, you won’t feel it as much as someone who has R30 and gives away R10, you know what I mean.*

Nombeko placed a greater sentimental value on the small amount her boyfriend spent on her as opposed to the large amount of resources her SD provided for her. This was due to the different expectations she had within each of her relationships and the ways in which those expectations were transcribed onto money spent on her. Because her ‘for real, for real’ boyfriend was a relationship based on love, the small amount of money spent was also contextualized within sentiments of love. The resources her SD gave her, on the other hand, was held to a standard of monetary value as this was the key reasons she was with him. Nombeko’s two relationships and the ways money was characterized in each of them exemplified the notion of different monies for different relationships.

Money as hard currency was loaded with social meaning in SDRs and was less frequently exchanged than gifts, favours and services. Money, itself was characterized as cold and distant, thus an objectifier in sexual relationships (Zelizer 2005). Young women expressed that the

reception of money represented a lack of interest and feelings towards them, weakening their value to and interest taken by the SDs. Further, the kinds of resources given were appropriated by the young women in relation to the stage they felt their SDRs were in. Hence, certain gifts and favours were deemed not enough as the relationship had progressed beyond that point. Conversely, resources considered to be 'too much' were associated with a greater 'price' in the form of sex. For those who were in multiple concurrent sexual relationships with 'for real, for real' boyfriends and their SDs, they relayed the different monetary expectations from each relationship. As the SDs possessed greater financial capital, more resources were expected from him unlike, the boyfriends who were limited in this respect. A CRDA holds that constructions of social reality draw from the material world, inscribing social and symbolic meaning on this material (Danermark 2002, Sims-Schouten 2007). This revealed that young women associated degrees of intimacy to the amount of resources given to them and the form that these resources took. Again, they constructed the progression of their SD relationships around its materiality. The resource itself served as a tangible marker of the degree of their SDRs. While the attainment of resources was the predominant reason for engaging in SDR, the *form* the resources took were symbolic of the SDR itself and were associated with specific meanings that were appropriated by the young women. This domain of resources and their social and symbolic meaning in SDRs is an area that was only explored on a rudimentary level in this study and it is acknowledged that further research is needed.

Chapter 10: Implications for HIV/AIDS

'Uhh, I think in this day in age everybody knows about the disease. I mean in South Africa the stats are so high. I can't afford not to know about this disease. And I have a family member who died of AIDS'

-Zinhle

Young women's knowledge base of HIV/AIDS consisted of biomedical sources learnt in formal settings such as high school and social sources stemming from their social realities of who was affected by the disease. The knowledge that they drew from their social realities which stemmed from situations of poverty overrode discourses of how the disease was transmitted and methods of prevention. This had a tremendous influence on their risk perceptions. Additionally, a *thatha ma chance* youth risk culture and ideas of trust and intimacy also played an integral role in their risky sexual behaviour.

10.1 Basic Knowledge of HIV/AIDS

All of the young women had a basic biomedical knowledge of HIV/AIDS, understanding the virus and how it was transmitted. Further, every individual understood the disease within a South African context, knowing that HIV/AIDS was widespread and infecting general populations in the country at very high rates. Simone commented,

Here, in this time, like you have to know about it. It's everywhere. It's just a part of your life. Like if you're from this country, you probably have a general understanding of the disease and how it works, you know.

Sesi simple commented,

How can you not know about AIDS?

10.1.1 Knowledge Sources

Most of the young women cited formal education, well-known myths and personal experience as their main sources of knowledge of HIV/AIDS. These sources, for them, solidified the accuracies and inaccuracies of their knowledge base.

High school was the most common institution where knowledge of the disease was retrieved. Sesi's first exposure to formal knowledge of the disease was there,

Yah, prior, I knew HIV/AIDS, like I knew what it was but I didn't really know what it was, you know what I mean. My school taught all the basics like how to get it, how it works in the body and stuff like that. And how to prevent it. But yah, I have friends who are in varsity...like they know the basics but sometimes they'll ask if some stupid myth is true, you know.

Sizani also cited information given in high school as being her primary knowledge source,

We learnt about it in high school. They would have counselors and stuff come in and teach it for about an hour or so. Yah, so that's where I learnt the disease properly.

While myths were known, none of the young women referred to them as part of their knowledge base of HIV/AIDS. There was the general belief that they perpetuated misinformation and did not influence their perceptions of HIV/AIDS and its pathology. Zinhle exclaimed in this regard, *Oh, I've heard stuff! Like nasty stuff. Like if you sleep with a virgin, it will take HIV away. And the Zuma one was like whoa! Unbelievable in this day and age for a prominent figure.*

Zuma's folly in proclaiming that he immediately had a shower after sexual intercourse with an HIV positive woman thus, protecting himself, was a major reference for misinformation and myths about the disease. Simone felt that this declaration made by Zuma was a result of ignorance and silence,

Like, for such a public figure, for him to come out and say that he showered...like, are you serious?! I think it really shows the state of this country on this issue. There are people who are still very ignorant and don't really know what going on. Which is so scary because rates are so high in this country. Like, how can we still afford to keep quiet on this?

Mbeki's dissident approach to AIDS was also referred to by Nombeko,

Like, everyone knows about AIDS here [South Africa]. Mbeki put it out there, with his, his controversial views, you know. It's kaak [shit] though! So like, even if it didn't affect you, it was clear that it was a big deal cause he made it an issue. It was, obviously it was affecting the country.

There were several myths that were common knowledge, such as sexual intercourse with a virgin will cure you from the virus and that if one takes a shower subsequently to having sex, they will be protected. However, none of the young women held them to be of any truth and reduced them to simply being myths.

Every single participant had personal experience of witnessing the illness and/or subsequent death of an HIV positive individual. Often times this person was a family member or a friend. Zinhle disclosed,

And I have a family member who died of AIDS this year in April. My uncle.

Tola: And did he come out saying that he was positive?

He hid it well but my family did after he died....because it doesn't matter anymore.

Sizani said,

I have two friends who are positive, yah, at home. And I had a friend who died last year. Like, it was so, so, so messed up, you know. Like she was a shell of her former self. I cried for her. I didn't even go to the funeral. It hurt too much.

Thembile also spoke of seeing firsthand the effects of AIDS,

Yeah, and also someone, what should I say...she's not really family but we took her in as like...as though she's part of the family so the daughter to that lady who we took in yeah....had the disease. I actually witness a person with HIV....yeah....

Tola: Did it change what you thought of the disease before?

Well, at first you would hear AIDS AIDS AIDS. For me it was like ugh, whatever. But then once I saw that lady and she had like full blown. So it was like uh wake up call, like this is a deadly disease.

For all of the young women HIV/AIDS was not only something they were taught about, it was part of their social reality. All had at least a general knowledge base of accurate information to

draw from in addition to the personal experiences of witnessing the illness of a friend or family member. The young women understood the disease to have permeated their lives in terms of the inundation of HIV awareness campaigns and infected individuals from their familial and social networks. Further, in a larger context, South Africa was featured as a space where HIV/AIDS was rampant. Reference to Mbeki and Zuma and the role that HIV/AIDS played in their private and public lives further entrenched the disease as something of great relevance and importance.

10.2 Risk Perception

HIV/AIDS was characterized as something that was everywhere, yet always far away. Despite the extensive knowledge and experience that all of the young women possessed, there was an evident disparity between this knowledge and their personal risk perception and resulting sexual behaviour (Parker 2009, Peltzer & Penpid 2006). Being aware of statistics in South Africa and having witnessed the disease personally did not directly influence how they perceived their own risk to becoming infected. Awareness of how the disease affected them on a daily basis did not necessarily translate into them taking precautions in relation to how the disease may *infect* them in the future.

10.2.1 Risk Dependent on Partner's Fidelity

Several women perceived their own risk of becoming infected to be dependent on the fidelity of their partners. Their chances of being infected with HIV were based on their partner contracting the virus. Exercising choice in ensuring safe sex was not always considered to be a viable option. Zinhle clearly stated that her maintaining a negative status directly depended on her partner's sexual loyalty,

Well....I would like to believe that my fiancé is not doing what he's not supposed to. Because if he does, it would be putting me in danger because we're both in this relationship and we're not using a condom so he would be putting me in danger. I do think about it. Like you know, what if, this person is not being faithful and I get infected. You know, it's a reality and it's not something you can ignore.

Thembile declared,

If people were to stop cheating and people were to stop sleeping around this wouldn't happen. Having one partner. Scrutinize!

She also acknowledged that everyone was at risk of becoming infected because of the possibility of infidelity,

No, it can happen to anyone, including myself if I don't take the...relevant....procedures...hence, I said honesty. If your partner can't be honest, you'll end up having that disease. So it can happen to anyone. You might be faithful but then the next person isn't and then you end up having the disease not because of you were negligent or anything but because of somebody else....anything can happen to anyone.

10.2.2 Distancing/Othering of HIV/AIDS

There was a great tendency to distance and other infected populations. This occurred despite the fact that all of the young women knew people who died of AIDS or were currently living with HIV. Further, a number of women expressed that they were in multiple concurrent sexual relationships and most admitted to not consistently implementing safer sex practices. Sesi's and Nombeko's perceptions were two examples. Sesi commented,

Like I've known a few people who had the disease. Yah, even in my family. But I look at the lifestyles they were living and think like, they were...it was bound to happen sooner or later. They were just living in a way that wasn't good for them and it eventually caught up with them.

Nombeko also commented,

I even heard that HIV rates are really, really high in KZN. Like almost 50% in some places. I don't think I'd go there or be with someone from there. Like I know it's not right but it would always be in the back of my mind, you know.

Along with several other women, Nombeko stigmatized populations from KZN as being diseased because of high rates in this region. However, she was a young adult female periodically having unprotected sex with both her SD and her boyfriend.

Yah, with my current 'sugar daddy', I really try to make sure that I'm protected. Because, yah, I don't want, like I cannot put my boyfriend at risk, you know. We just have sex. I mean, we have sex with no protection so I can't really be like exposing him to the possibility of getting something.

This would place her in a demographic that was at ‘high risk’ of HIV infection. However, Nombeko did not perceive her risky sexual behaviour as increasing her vulnerability despite her adequate knowledge of HIV/AIDS. Instead, she centered in on a regional population and labeled them as a high risk group.

Sizani also spoke of having multiple concurrent sexual partners in the past and how this affected her decisions to practice safe sex with her SD.

Oh yah, I’m not really seeing anyone else now but I’ve done it before. But yeah, I’m not gonna say I was always successful. But yah, I try to like, I do my best to trying to make sure that my boyfriends were not exposed or anything. But yah, like I said, I wasn’t always successful.

Yah, with my current ‘sugar daddy’, I really try [her emphasis] to make sure that I’m protected. Because, yah, I don’t want, like I cannot put my boyfriend at risk, you know.

Both women distanced themselves by othering certain demographics based on a supposed lifestyle and place of origin despite ‘trying’ but not always using protection with her SD. Because of this, neither woman associated themselves with groups that were deemed to be more at risk and thus, reduced their perceived chances of infection, making them appear to themselves, less vulnerable. Particularly, as members of the demographic in South Africa being infected at the highest rates in the entire country, distancing and othering mechanisms were used disassociating themselves from vulnerability to the disease. Sesi and Nombeko illustrated the disparity between HIV/AIDS knowledge and safer sex practices.

10.2.3 *Thatha Ma Chance*: Youth Risk-Taking Culture

One way in which practical knowledge of HIV/AIDS and risk were overshadowed was by the youth culture of risk-taking amongst youth specifically intensified in a university setting. While many of the young women had enough resources of information to make informed decisions, the attitude of ‘*thatha ma chance*’, meaning ‘take my chance’ in Nguni languages originating from black urban youth cultures, often prevailed. This was particularly the case in their earlier years of university. Sesi recounts her experiences in first year,

Yah, like I said before. Uhm, yah, first year was over the top. I did have a few one night stands and stuff. I'd be lying if I said that I protected myself with all of them...not even most of them. But you know, I'm very blessed to not have caught anything. Like, I thank God everyday that...that this wasn't the situation.

Lindiwe also spoke of the risk-taking culture at Wits,

Well, like my peer group, Wits students, I think they have the knowledge they need to protect themselves but they just don't care. I mean they think it's fine having unprotected sex. I hear it all the time. But they do know the consequences, they do know about HIV...They do know but they just don't care. They're having too much fun. I mean one of my friends is pregnant now.

The *thatha ma chance* youth risk-taking culture largely appeared to be associated with independence from family and exposure to extensive peer groups and associated influences as spoken of in Chapter 4. Two of Selikow's four phenomena of the *thatha ma chance* 'logic' can be applied here (2005). In this context, 'sex as material resource' and 'living in the present' qualified. While life-threatening dangers or fatalistic attitudes were not recognized by these young women, they expressed periods of not caring and living in the 'here and now' and engaging in risky sexual behaviour in relationships based on material consumption. The *tata ma chance* youth culture of risk-taking was also a major factor as it contributed to young women chancing it when it came to unprotected sex with their SDs. This culture of risk was also said to be prevalent and intense in the Wits setting where many students were engaging in risky sexual behaviour. Ideas of youth associated with invincibility and placing immediate gratification over possible delayed illness exemplified this youth culture and greatly informed the social behaviour of these young women.

10.2.4 Ideas of Intimacy and Trust

Elements of intimacy occur within the construction of a 'boyfriend/girlfriend' relationship, further emphasizing the vital importance of understanding the intimacies beyond the transaction in SDRs due to the feelings of trust that may deter young women from consistently having protected sex. Once in a situation where they felt that they trusted their partner, use of condoms

along with other forms of contraceptives was more likely to decrease or even cease all together (MacPhail & Campbell 2001). Lerato, reinforced this by speaking on the role trust played in her sexual relations with her SD,

And you know, when you're in a relationship, a long stable one, you won't get exposed because there's an element of trust there but you have to be careful in the sense that accidents happen even if you're using a condom...If I now run everytime we have sex, then what does that say? I don't trust him. Then why am I in a relationship and having sex with him, you know?...and once you're married, are you now gonna say no, you must use protection? Your husband would be like, 'woman, you're mad'.

As mentioned earlier, Lerato admitted to not always practicing safe sex of her own volition. Thus, there have been incidences where unprotected sex occurred. However, she speaks of trust as being a significant factor in her relationship and how it affects her decisions to engage in unsafe sex. Sesi stated,

Yah, I don't always have protected sex with my boyfriend, no. But I trust him. Trust him enough to use a condom if he's having sex with anyone else. And I think he trusts me to do the same. I do, anyway.

Tola: Have you had this conversation with him? Concerning you trusting him to use protection if he, uhm, is having sex with someone else.

No, not directly hey. But yah, I think he would regardless...yah.

Lerato conceptualized her infection vulnerability in relation to the fidelity of her SD. Her narrative integrated the *thata ma chance* risk culture and ideas of intimacy and trust.

All of the young women possessed extensive knowledge about HIV/AIDS including how the virus was transmitted and the ways in which one could protect themselves. Apart from biological and epidemiological understanding of HIV/AIDS, they all were aware of the serious pandemic South Africa was facing as a country with some of the highest infection rates in the world. Because of this, the social manifestation of HIV/AIDS in the lives of the young women was intense. Each knew at least one person in their family and social circles who was currently living with the virus or had died of the disease. In addition to epidemiological discourses, they drew upon this social reality as part of their knowledge base of HIV/AIDS. Mechanisms of distancing and othering were utilized by the young women in efforts to remove themselves from

populations at risk of infection. A CRDA exposed that the women drew from their social realities in diverting vulnerability to populations they perceived to be leading a conducive lifestyle to infection and who originated from KZN province. Despite their epidemiological knowledge of HIV/AIDS, the young women did not perceive themselves as being at high risk. As discussed earlier, many women expressed the inability to negotiate safe sex with their SDs and enforce condom use and others simply did not of their own volition. Also, several women admitted to being in multiple concurrent sexual relationships where safe sex was inconsistently practiced with both their SD and their 'for real, for real' boyfriends. A CRDA showed that the women incorporated information from their social realities, though contradictory and completely incorrect, into their epidemiological knowledge base. The material conditions in which they experienced and conceptualized HIV/AIDS were rooted in socio-economic situations where poverty was an overwhelming factor. Therefore, individuals who led fast lifestyles and those from KZN stemmed from realities where black South African populations are being disproportionately infected at higher rates than any other demographic, particularly in the province of KZN.

Through epidemiological discourses, the rampant youth risk-taking culture of *thata ma chance* among peer groups in the university setting placed young women at a greater vulnerability of becoming infected with HIV/AIDS. However, the phenomenon of utilizing sex as a material resource and having it, often unprotected, in the present with little or no regard for the future consequences were two characteristics of *thata ma chance* that were prevalent within peer groups in the university setting. A CRDA understood this youth risk-taking culture in SDRs to be characterized by the attainment of material resources through the commoditization of sex to be prioritized over taking precautions for the possibility of becoming infected with HIV/AIDS in the future. Peer groups as a structural influence enforced both the ideals of femininity associated with materialism and a *thata ma chance* mentality within the environment of the university. One concern to address is the issue of the 'rational thinker'. Biomedical approaches adhere to notions of rational behaviour, presuming that young women actively and individually make choices regarding risky sexual behaviour (Fay 1996:31). This perspective solely focuses on agency and negates the structural and social influences that inform young women and their choices. While a comprehensive debate on rational choice theory will not be concentrated on

here, moving away from applying an individualistic approach towards a problematization of decision-making in sexual encounters within SDRs is desired.

Chapter 11: Conclusions

11.1 Central Findings

Critical realism holds that our knowledge of reality and the material world is constantly being reconciled through our conceptualizations of it (Danermark et al 2002). Further, CRDA puts forth that in discourse, the material world is *related* to the discursive and not *reduced to* or *dependent* on it (Danermark et al 2002, Sims-Schouten et al 2007). In relation to the structure/agency debate, CRDA is compatible with Archer's (2003) approach to structure and agency as it does not place them in opposition to one other. Archer holds that structure and agency are 'ontologically inseparable' as each entered into the other's constitution" (2003:1). It provides a platform for the interrogation of how actions navigate and work through structural entities (Archer 2003).

Structures are understood to be pre-existing entities where actions are enabled and inhibited (Danermark et al 2002). Such structural forces were identified in this study, tremendously impacting the ways in which young women constructed their sexuality and how these constructs manifested within their SDRs. From their families, young women were continuously receiving institutionalized messages of cultural and social beliefs and practices. Living in a patriarchal society such as South Africa, ideas of the subservient and passive woman subject to her male partner, the 'provider' within the relationship and subsequently, their sexual encounters, were being reinforced. The witnessed experiences of female relatives served to bolster these constructions where they were remembered as fulfilling or attempting to fulfill this role. The material connection to this sexuality construction linked the dependence on husbands and male partners for financial support to the limitation of their choices. Placing their social realities in a context of the recent apartheid history and the changing political economy of South Africa has had intense influence on how the young women construct their sexuality (Parker 2001, Parker & Aggleton 2007). The recent influx of mass media into the country introduced new perceptions of sexuality, predominantly from Western popular culture, both conflicting with and reinforcing their constructs. Young women drew upon media references such as the 'Beyonce Syndrome' linking ownership of material resources and independence as markers of the ideal femininity. Peer groups within the university setting reinforced these constructs of sexuality subjecting

women to pressures to attain specific social standards. Finally, Johannesburg provided a setting where women were independent from their family but financially dependent on them for support.

A CRDA revealed that all of these structures composed the social reality of the young women, sending simultaneous messages conflicting and contradicting one another but, nonetheless, partly informing how they constructed their sexuality. A conclusion reached in this study revealed that female sexuality was often linked to material resources and dependency on men to attain them. Furthermore, SDRs were not only viable options for these young women, they were a *more* socially acceptable form of a money-sex transaction than prostitution. SDRs were a coping mechanism young women chose as a way of navigating the conflicting messages of sexuality being received from structural forces. While they conformed to social and cultural norms, through the commodification of the one resource they had to offer, namely sex, young women exerted agency that also challenged these norms.

Sexuality in Gender

This research adopted the definition of sexuality proposed by Holland et al (1990) holding that sexuality cannot be reduced to sexual acts but is also heavily constructed and informed by what people know and believe about sex and socially acceptable ways in which it is appropriated. A CRDA adds to this definition that these constructions of sexuality are interpreted through one's social reality and their material world (Sims-Schouten et al 2007). However, this understanding of sexuality does not acknowledge the intricate interlink with gender. Adding to this definition, sexuality is not only informed by gender, but it works within its larger framework (Gagnon & Parker 1995:8). Therefore, gender constructions of young women's femininity mediate sexual practices within SDRs. Holland et al's definition is attuned to CRDA which understands the constructs of gender and their relations to sexuality to be greatly informed by structures young women are exposed to.

The nature of youth sexualities in South Africa includes severe disparities in gender relations placing young women in positions of subordination. These gendered power differentials are

brought into sexual relationships where similar power dynamics reinforced by gender continue to inform sexual behaviour. This was shown to be no less the case in SDRs.

Two main gender roles each for men and women were constructed by the young women based on the primary characteristics they felt each gender innately possessed. Overwhelmingly, traditional roles of 'man as the provider' and 'woman as the nurturer/supporter' were drawn upon through essentialist discourses as proper gender roles. Extensive narratives of the 'natural' and 'God-given' attributes of a man being able to provide predominantly in a financial capacity were spoken of. Moreover, women were meant to be supporters and nurturers to their male partners creating a comfortable environment for the men to be better able to provide.

Through a CRDA, conclusions arise from these constructions of gender roles and their potential impact on the sexuality of the young women. Women drew upon traditional and modern constructions of gender for both men and women. However, ideas of the woman as a supporter/nurturer and man as the provider not only dominated but were naturalized as biological traits. However, while 'man as the equal' and the 'independent woman' countered the traditionalist views of gender roles, they were not spoken of as a social reality for the young women. Social messages from family, community, peer groups and South African society as a whole informed traditional gender constructs and reinforced them. Young women spoke of female relatives and other women in their lives who were financially reliant on their partners. Outside of media portrayals, such as the example of Beyoncé, none of them recounted individuals who occupied this position. As observed in the analysis of the social meaning of money, sexual relationships were deeply interlinked with economic exchanges. A man who was able to provide a woman with financial security was deemed to be 'full'. Discourses of being entitled to resources from male partners were given by young women both in SDs and other relationships.

I argue that these gender constructs do two things. Firstly, the traditional gender roles paralleled and informed the roles that the young women and their SDs occupied in their relationships. The SDs were clear providers in a financial capacity and young women constructed themselves as

someone their SDs could talk to and give support to. Secondly, they informed how the young women constructed, mediated and enacted their sexuality within their SDRs. Tying into the nature of SDRs where the acquisition of resources created an inherent power differential in regards to sex negotiation, women's gender roles of a supporter/nurturer suggested an analogous role within sexual encounters. I stress that this is suggested as it was evident that young women's negotiating power within sexual encounters was limited and the discourses did not directly link gender roles to this. Within a context of SDRs, this is a topic that is in need of further study.

Power and the Negotiation of Sex

In the context of SDRs and transactional sex as a whole, the misled 'victim vs. vixen' approach has been utilized in literature as a means of portraying the ultimate empowerment or disempowerment of young women engaging these types of relationships. This study took a Foucauldian approach thus, understanding power to be continuously exerted and inhibited at various levels and in different domains as opposed to a unilateral relation (1979). Sexuality it is not an entity being repressed by power. Rather, it appears as an "especially dense transfer point for relations of power (Foucault 1979:103)". Thus, any approach perceiving women in SDRs to be ultimately empowered, utilizing their sexuality for their own material gain (vixen) or disempowered, subject to the sexual exploitation of their older male counterparts (victim) upholds a false dualism of the structure/agency debate. This dichotomy is not compatible with a Foucauldian take on power. Further, a CRDA also does not operate within this framework. CRDA incorporates the symbolic aspects of power and its relation to material features. It allows for the analysis of power differentials within sexual relationships and the exploration of resulting sexual practices in SDRs.

The actions of young women were both constrained and exerted within SDRs in various domains. This study showed that within the domain of relationship maintenance, namely, the time young women spent with their SDs where sex, attainment of resources or both occurred, was an area where women's choices were restrained. Sex was central to meetings of which women expressed that advances made by their SDs were at times, unwanted. The power

imbalance gave SDs greater control of the circumstances under which they met with the young women and the terms and conditions that went along with doing so. The context under which this took place directly related to the nature of the relationship itself. The premise of SDRs is that the primary reason for their engagement is for the transaction. Money and other resources are exchanged for sexual relations. The materiality of this type of relationship is an integral component as women expressed that if access to resources ceased, they would terminate the relationship. Once the acquisition of resources were factored into the nature of the sexual encounters of the young women, the choices available to them in regards to when and where they met up and the conditions under which they had sex were limited. Thus, the very nature of SDRs was conducive to a disempowerment of the women who engaged in them. Young women spoke of having to meet up and have sex whenever their SDs decided to come to their residences. Because SDs had given them resources, the women expressed they had to 'keep up' their end of the transaction on the terms of their SDs. This financial capacity of the SDs constrained women's negotiating power as to when sexual encounters occurred. Instances of rape and sexual coercion were recounted as responses to refusal to have sex. The rationale given by SDs was based on him giving her resources and thus, deserving to be compensated.

Financial dependency also restricted women's agency in negotiating sex. Being reliant on their SDs for resources placed the women in a position where they did not have autonomy to disregard demands made by their SDs. This material dependency created a power dynamic where the potential of SDs exerting control over the young women's sexuality, in terms of when they had sex and how, was recognized by the young women. The resources transacted within SDRs were the immediate factor of sexual encounters. They often expressed feeling obligated to have sex with their SDs as they felt it was 'expected' of them once they had accepted resources. Additionally, it directly affected the balance of power within these encounters as their acceptance was believed to be an entitlement to sexual relations both by SDs and many of the young women alike.

Young Women and the Power of Resistance

However, there were creative ways in which young women navigated structures that aided in constraining their choices through the enactment of a power of resistance. Structures limited women's choices in negotiating sex but this did not mean that they were 'victims', possessing no ability to make choices. Though these choices were constrained, this did not resolve their chosen courses of action. Though women were often unable to decide whether or not sex occurred and the conditions of this sex, this resistance allowed for 'micro decision-making' (Wojcicki & Malala 2001) within constrained situations where young women were privy to a limited number of actions.

Foucault (1979) proposes that resistance is an innate part of any power relation sporadically popping up in different situations. This resistance operates as a dynamic of power change. An exemplar of this was the tactic of 'disappearing' recounted by the young women as a means of counteracting their constraints of negotiation. 'Disappearing' involved securing resources from an SD and effectively avoiding contact with him, having not engaged in any sexual relations. This tactic was often executed in public spaces with friends present as to prevent retaliation from the SD. 'Disappearing' in and of itself presented potential dangers to the young women and they acknowledged that it was not a strategy to be utilized indefinitely. Although no accounts of violence or force were relayed, one young woman spoke of her SD giving her an ultimatum of escalating the relationship or permanently terminating it.

Young women resisted financial dependency on their SDs through mechanisms that reduced their reliance on the SDs or, at the very least, created a perception of financial independency. Through tactics of ensuring that their SDs were aware that they did not need them in order to be financially secure, be it by conveying that there were 'other fish in the sea' or by 'saving something for a rainy day', young women expressed producing a situation where their SDs were less likely to take advantage of their dependency. This projection of independence was

implemented by the young women to increase their choices and ability to act on them in circumstances where their SDs might attempt to exert control over them in sexual encounters.

Powers of resistance were clearly exerted by the women in situations where their choices were constrained in sexual encounters with their SDs. However, throughout this study, women expressed being highly active social agents in the initiation of SDRs, be it through friends or on their own. Terms such as ‘scanning for’ and ‘finding’ were utilized in reference to choosing a SD based on social markers of resources. Certain clubs were deemed to be spaces where potential SDs socialized and thus, were spaces of recruitment. Without question, young women actively sought out men who appeared to be able to provide resources to them. In this domain, the power in the initiation of an SDR was exerted by young women in this study.

This exertion of power by young women problematizes questions of power in SDRs. Women were in situations where they were often financially dependent on their SDs, exacerbating their inability to negotiate when and how sex occurred and increasing their vulnerability to HIV infection. Yet, they played active roles in initiating SDRs that ultimately put them in this compromising position. Situations where their ability to take certain actions were constrained were, in part, created by the young women themselves. However, they understood this to be ‘taking the good with the bad’. The ‘good’ being the resources attained from their SDs and the ‘bad’ referring to situations where they were not in full control of their bodies during sexual encounters. Ultimately, the acquisition of resources took priority over reducing the restraints on their ability to make choices around sex and their risk of HIV infection.

Beyond the Transaction

The intimacies beyond the transaction are a highly underdocumented element of SDRs as the transaction itself and its implications have been the main focus in social science. Throughout this research, emotive conveyances of love, desire, pleasure and trust were interweaved into the young women’s constructions of their relationships and sexuality. These expressions were genuine despite the transaction being the predominating factor of SDR engagement. Using a

CRDA, the construction of the young women's SDs as 'boyfriends' illustrates this. A CRDA also understands that the transaction inherent in SDRs occurs within the context of a relationship. On this note, the intimacies expressed by young women were constructed around the most essential component of SDRs, the resource, as relationships were terminated once access to them no longer occurred. Though sentiments of intimacy were authentic, women constructed their SDs as 'boyfriends' and 'providers' as opposed to 'clients' for specific reasons. Stressing the construction of a relationship was motivated as a means of differentiating themselves from prostitution, largely due to the heavy social stigmatization association with it. Because of the relationship context, SDRs were deemed to be *more* socially acceptable than any relationship understood to be engaged solely for the transaction.

A CRDA revealed the synonymy of resources and feelings of intimacy as being a social reality. Young women expressed social markers of power, resources and social status invoking feelings of desire and sexual attraction to their SDs. Further, feelings described as love were expressed by the young women. However, despite these claims of love, there was a 'no money, no sex' mentality dominating any feeling expressed (Silberschmidt & Rasch 2001). The resources themselves evoked sentiments towards the SDs that dissipated once the resources ceased. The resources themselves, not the SD who possessed them, induced sentiments.

The Social Meanings of Money

A CRDA provides a framework to analyze sexual economies and to understand the institutionalized management of material resources and how it mediates and informs sexuality. A distinguishing factor between SDRs and prostitution raised by young women related to the type of resources being transacted and its symbolism in characterizing the relationship. Young women stressed that their SDs usually transacted resources in the form of gifts, favours and services such as going out to expensive dinners, transportation, shopping sprees and less frequently, money for their own disposable income. This was in opposition to 'prostitutes' who were perceived to strictly transact sex for money. A CRDA revealed that the 'coldness' of money as an objectifier void of all sentimentality was understood to be representational of the relationship itself.

Intimacy was expected to impact the form of payments transacted (Zelizer 2005). Resources being given in other forms were desired as it gave emotive signifiers. The form of the resources transacted was symbolic of the type of sexual relationship women had with their SDRs. If hard currency was given exclusively, it reduced the relationship to the transaction. This was despite the transaction being the predominant motive for engaging in SDR.

A CRDA also understood that the appropriateness of the form of payment was also dependent on the stage of the sexual relationship. Young women expressed that the progression of the SDR corresponded with the amount and type of resources given to them. It was expected that as the relationship progressed, the amount of or the type of resources given would increase as well. Conversely, if resources given surpassed the stage of the SDR that the young women felt it was at, there was reluctance to accept as such gifts were anticipated to 'come at a price'.

This area of sexual economies and how they manifest in SDRs revealed their extensiveness and importance. However, it also revealed a gap in this study which will hopefully prompt future research. Overall, in an SDR where the transaction of resources and sexual relations was predominant, the young women characterized the material resources as an indication of levels of intimacy. Despite the transaction, the relationship and intimacy was constructed around the resource.

Implications for HIV/AIDS Risk

This study yielded that young women had substantial formal HIV/AIDS knowledge in respect of how the virus was contracted and safe sex practices. Through a CRDA, however, the influences of their social realities and material world were also drawn upon in their understanding of the disease consequently, impacting sexual practices within the SDRs. All women were from communities and social networks which the virus had extensively permeated thus, all had experiences of knowing someone who was living with or had died from the disease. Most were from places where poverty was commonplace stemming from historical and political contexts.

The incongruity of biomedical approaches in research on youth sexualities becomes apparent when observing the knowledge sources of the young women generated outside of epidemiological concepts. The material conditions under which the young women experienced and conceptualized HIV/AIDS was a social reality and part of their overall understanding of the disease. Furthermore and of great importance, this social reality was drawn upon as an additional strain of HIV/AIDS knowledge. Drawing from their interpretation of this social reality, the utilization of distancing and othering mechanisms to distinguish themselves from perceived 'high risk' populations were pervasive. The lifestyles of individuals who had died of the disease and Zulu populations from Kwazulu-Natal were some of the young women's reference points, perceiving these demographics as being more vulnerable to HIV infection than themselves. The groups that they identified as being 'high risk', though wholly erroneous, stemmed from real situations where black South African populations were being infected and affected by the disease in disproportionate numbers, these numbers particularly being high in the province of Kwazulu-Natal. These understanding of risk perception tied into the young women's HIV/AIDS knowledge base. Despite their conceptions of whom HIV/AIDS infected and whom it was less likely to, the disease itself was real and pervasive in their families and communities and was an omnipresent source of understandings of HIV/AIDS. The overall knowledge base of the young women was grounded in ideas from multiple sources, both epidemiological and social. What cannot be ignored is the materiality of poverty and disenfranchisement of communities that many of the women originated from in South Africa. How HIV/AIDS has manifested in these spaces is a reference point for young women's conclusions about the disease though they conflict with epidemiological constructs of HIV/AIDS.

Young women did not view themselves as being at risk of infection although they admittedly engaged in high risk sexual behaviour, namely, unprotected sex. Therefore, their perceptions of risk directly impacted on the women's sexual practices with their SDs. Their constructions of HIV had implications for their physical realities. Several women admitted to not only having unprotected sex with their SDs, but also within additional multiple concurrent sexual relationships. Their knowledge of HIV/AIDS from biomedical approaches, even on a

rudimentary level, deemed this sexual behaviour to be high risk. Yet their social realities rooted infection in poverty and the relative understandings of a fast life and regional high risk.

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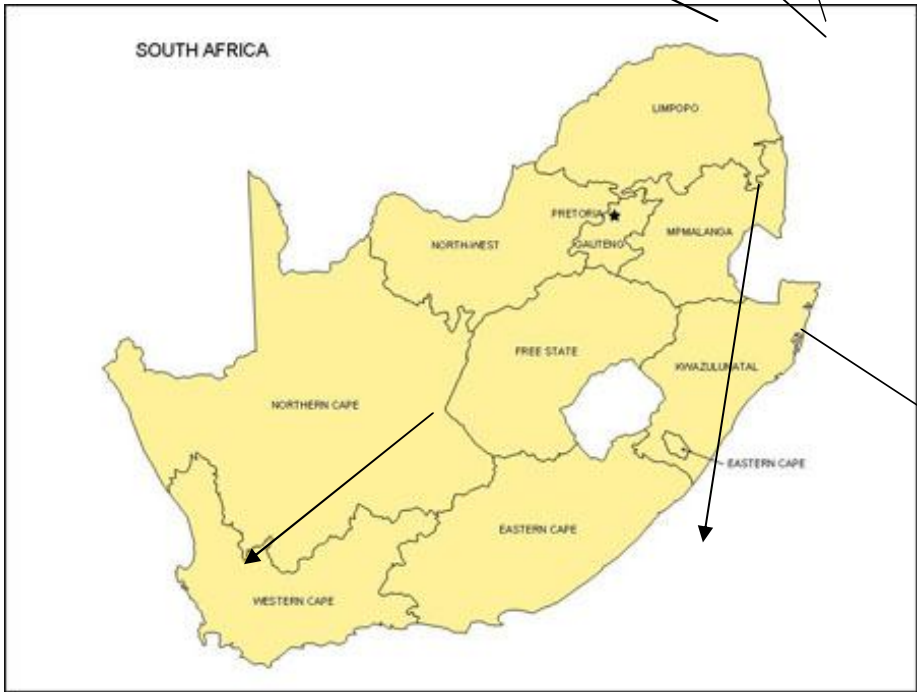
Thembile
22
Mafikeng,
Northwest
Partner: 34
Age Diff: 12

Sesi
21
Orange Farm
→Randfontein
Partner: 31
Age Diff: 10

Zinhle
23
Randfontein,
Gauteng
Partner: 37
Age Diff: 14

Phathu
22
Venda, Limpopo
Partner: 34
Age Diff: 12 yrs

Appendix A
Map of Participants
Basic Information



Age Diff: 11

Partner: 36
Age Diff: 11 yrs

Appendix B

Subject Information Sheet-Invitation to Participate

Study Title: Self-Constructs of Sexuality among Young Women at the University of the Witwatersrand In Inter-Generational Relationships

Invitation:

My name is Tola Gbalajobi and I am a Masters student at the University of the Witwatersrand. You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and exactly what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Also, feel free to ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research is to better understand how young women attending the University of the Witwatersrand in relationships with an individual of a different generation, define and understand their own sexuality and ways in which they feel it is empowering or disempowering to them. What factors in society, such as mass media, peer groups and culture influence sexuality.

Your participation in this study will consist of one group discussion on ideas around sex, sexuality and safe sex. This discussion is expected to last for approximately 1 hour. The second component of your participation will be a more detailed, one-on-one interview regarding personal ideas of the same themes from the group discussion. This interview is expected to last about 1 ½ to 2 hours. The interview will be scheduled at a time that is convenient for you in a location that you feel the most comfortable. All that is asked of you is that you are honest and open in the group discussion and in-depth interview.

Why have I been chosen?

You have been chosen as a potential participant for this study because you are a full-time, female student at the University of the Witwatersrand. You have also indicated that you are involved in a relationship with an individual who is of a different generation than yourself.

Do I have to take part?

Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. . If you do decide to participate, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You will also be free to withdraw at any stage of the study and are not required to give a reason for your decision to cease taking part. Further, a decision not to participate will have absolutely no negative affect on you.

What will happen to me if I take part?

With your permission, an audio recording device will be used to accurately record all interviews and group discussions. If you do not wish to be recorded, note-taking will be the means of recording information that you give in the interview.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Because all of the data collected from study will be kept in the strictest of confidence and every measure will be taken to ensure that anonymity of all participants is maintained, there are no foreseeable disadvantages or risks to being involved in this study.

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

You will receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study. The information that is collected during this study will give us a better understanding of how young women at the University of the Witwatersrand define, understand and enact their sexuality and the implications this may have on them.

Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

Yes. All information collected during the course of this research will be kept strictly confidential. In the resulting research report, you will be identified by and/or quoted under a pseudonym. Any information that could be used to reveal your true identity will not be used. Every step will be taken throughout this study to make sure that your identity remains anonymous.

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The data collected from this study will be used in a research report towards a Masters degree and for possible scientific journal publications.

Who has reviewed this study?

This study has been reviewed and approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) of the University of the Witwatersrand.

Thank you for taking part in this study.

Phone: **076 726 9659**

Email: Adetola.Gbalajobi@students.wits.ac.za

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me or my supervisor Dr. Selikow Terry-Ann.Selikow@wits.ac.za.

Consent:

I AGREE to participate in this study having been informed of the research content, purpose of the study and its intended results. I understand that if at any given time I am not comfortable and no longer wish to be a part of the study, I am freely able to terminate my participation and the use of any data that I have already provided.

I also understand that all data given will be kept in the strictest of confidence and every step will be taken to keep to ensure that my identity will remain anonymous.

Further, I agree to participation in the group discussion and the in-depth interview being recorded using an audio device and to the possible use of the recorded content in the resulting publication from this study.

Date

Participant Name

Participant Signature

Appendix C

Interview Consent Form

Project Title: Self-Constructs of Sexuality among Young Women at the University of the Witwatersrand In Inter-Generational Relationships

Student Researcher: Adetola Gbalajobi

Student Contact: Phone: 076 726 9659

Email: Adetola.Gbalajobi@students.wits.ac.za

Research Question: How are young women at the University of the Witwatersrand constructing their sexuality?

Purpose of study: The purpose of this research is to better understand how young women attending the University of the Witwatersrand define, understand and enact their own sexuality and ways in which they feel it is empowering or disempowering to them.

Results: Results from this study will be published in an Master of the Arts report once all of the research is completed. Confidentiality (as outlined in the subject information sheet) will be maintained. As a participant in this research, a copy of our final project will be made available to you if requested.

Right of Exclusion or Withdrawal: If at any given stage of your participation of this research you feel uncomfortable with the content of this research topic, you free to terminate your participation. You are not obligated in any way to continue if you do not wish to. You will not be asked to answer any questions or contribute to any discussions unwillingly.

Consent:

I AGREE to participate in this study having been informed of the research content, purpose of the study and its intended results. I understand that if at any given time I am not comfortable and no longer wish to be a part of the study, I am freely able to terminate my participation and the use of any data that I have already provided.

I also understand that all data given will be kept in the strictest of confidence and every step will be taken to keep to ensure that my identity will remain anonymous.

Date

Participant Name

Participant Signature

Appendix D

Audio Recording Consent Form

Consent:

I AGREE to allow all of my participation in the group discussion and the in-depth interview to be recording using an audio recording device.

I understand that this device is being used to accurately record what I say during my participation in this study and will later be transcribed and possibly used in the final research report. I also understand any given information that is recorded is subject to be used.

Date

Participant Name

Participant Signature